



The American Mercury

USING AND BIRTH CONTROL

Mildred Gilman

OW UNRRA BOLSTERED TITO

Eric L. Pridonoff

GOING TO SCHOOL WITH THE MOVIES

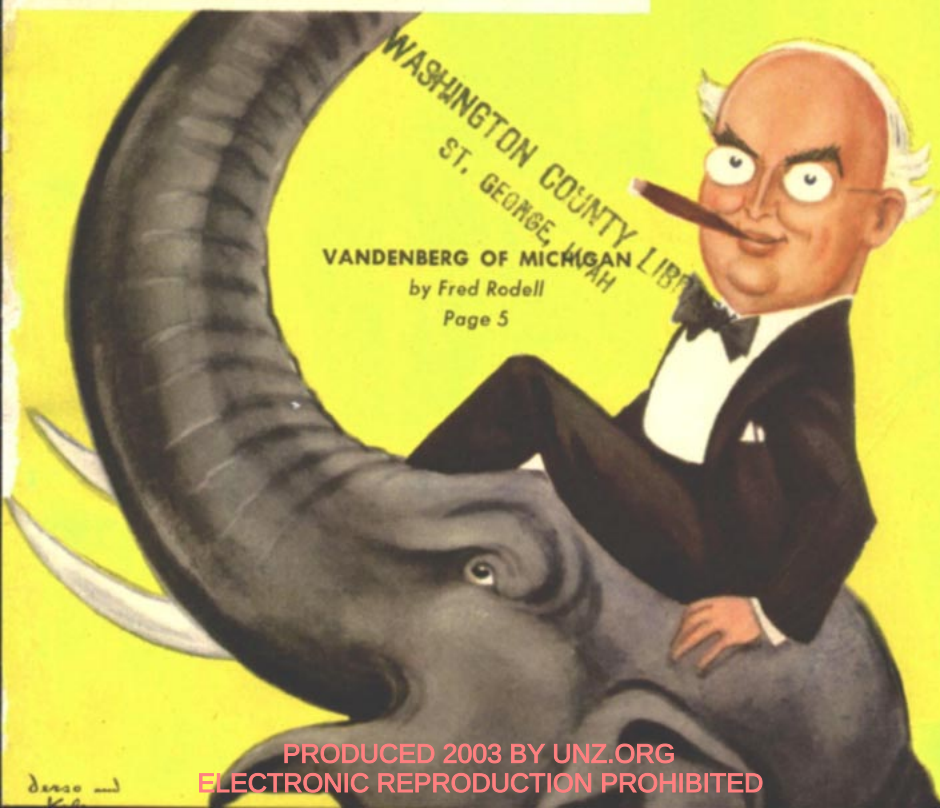
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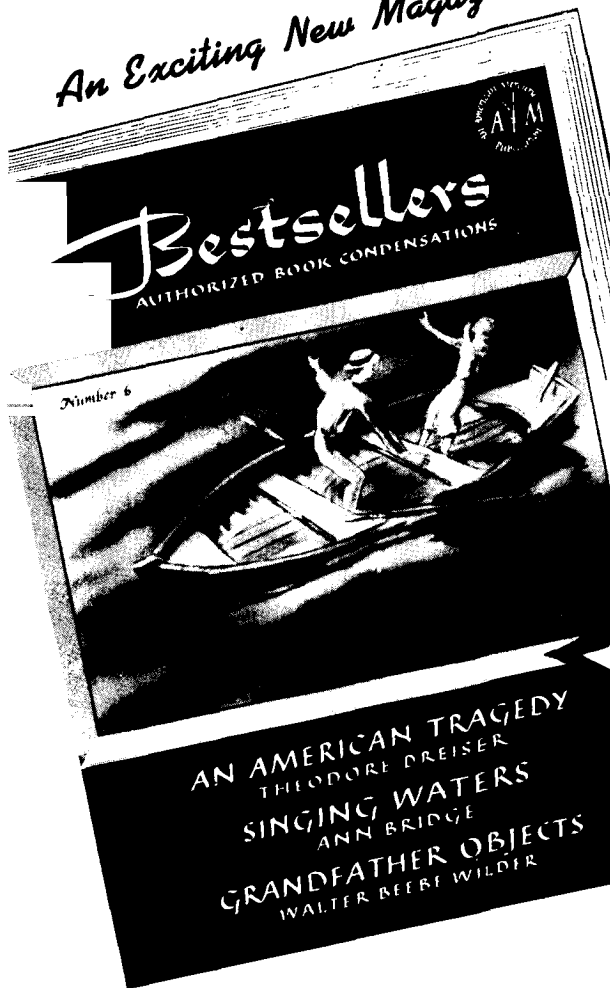
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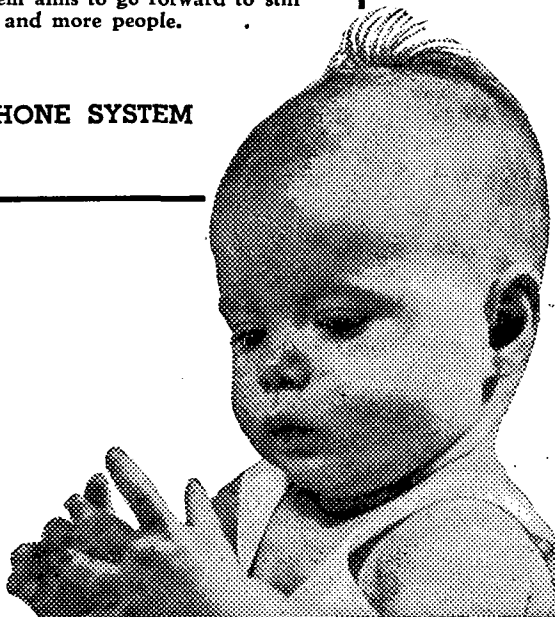
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The American MERCURY

VANDENBERG OF MICHIGAN

BY FRED RODELL

PERHAPS the Republican party will so bungle its forthcoming ride in the congressional saddle that the voters, after two short years, will have Had Enough. Perhaps the Republican party, two years hence, will reap, in partial innocence, the whirlwind of a delayed postwar depression. Perhaps the Democrats, in 1948, will come up with a miracle man. But if none of these things happens—and none today looks likely—then one of the two top jobs in the Federal government will almost surely fall, in 1949, to a former pushcart delivery boy who never went through college—a former small-city newspaperman who took time out from his editorials to write, for movie star Bebe Daniels, the lyrics of a song imploring her, “Bebe, Bebe, Bebe, be mine”—a

former isolationist who characteristically switched his stand at the psychological split-second—Arthur Hendrick Vandenberg of Michigan.

Vandenberg might well become the thirty-fourth President. No one takes seriously the crack he once made from his senatorial office on Capitol Hill: “Why anyone should want to shoulder that crucifixion down the street I don’t know.” And front-runners, like Bricker and Dewey and Stassen and Taft and Warren, have been known to kill each other off in convention before. But if Vandenberg misses the Presidency, for which his homburg has been set for years, no likely Republican President can keep from him the secretaryship of state. (Not even Dewey, despite his probable personal preference for his foreign-relations tutor, John Foster

FRED RODELL is professor of law at Yale. A former editor of *Fortune*, he is a frequent contributor to *THE AMERICAN MERCURY*, and a contributing editor of the *Progressive*.

Dulles.) For Vandenberg, whose chief claim to fame when he first came to the Senate was that he looked and acted more like a strutting, orating Claghornesque caricature than any Northerner in history, has achieved the acknowledged leadership of the Republican party on international affairs. The Democrats have not dared — nor have they wanted — to ignore him; the Republicans, if they win in '48, can scarcely do less.

The "big Michigander" (he is six-foot-one and weighs 200 pounds) can thank two traits for his rather sudden rise to truly national stature. One is a sense of political timing that has always made his successes look lucky instead of shrewd. Back about thirty years ago he resisted a nascent boom to run him for governor of Michigan; it was still too early, he felt, for a youngster in his thirties to burst into bigtime politics — and maybe take a licking; instead, he stuck to the editorial sanctum of the *Grand Rapids Herald* and built his fences so securely that in 1928 he was first appointed, then elected, to the U. S. Senate. In 1936 he could have had the Republican Presidential nomination almost for the asking since, alone among Republican senators from important states, he had weathered the Democratic landslide of 1934; instead, he let Alf Landon win the special niche in the hall of obscurity which was reserved that year for whatever Republican opposed Roosevelt. And early in 1945, after a career-long record of isolationism (which he called

"insulationism"), he made the famous Senate speech that swung Republican support to the Administration's international program and sent Senator Vandenberg himself to the San Francisco Charter conference, to the meetings of the United Nations, and to national bi-party prominence. Forgotten was the fact that Republican Senator Austin, for one, had for years been fighting for Rooseveltian interventionism and internationalism. Vandenberg's conversion was perfectly timed to collect the kudos.

The other Vandenberg trait that has helped him to the heights is a convenient lack of strong, unswerving conviction on any controversial subject. This apparent opportunism has been the butt of many *bons mots*. Washington newsmen once dubbed him the capital's "Yes and No Man." Said one political writer: "He has stood squarely on both sides of every issue of the past ten years. . . . The Old Guard dies but never surrenders. Vandenberg surrenders but never dies." In 1936, when Vandenberg looked like a GOP Presidential possibility, the late Joe Robinson, then Senate majority leader, suggested as a Republican slogan: "Vacuity, Vacillation and Vandenberg." And it was after Vandenberg had made a long speech on a proposed work relief bill that then-Senator Hugo Black, who had listened politely from start to finish, asked in all seriousness: "Is he for it or against it?"

The Vandenberg talent for blending flexibility and fuzziness stems in part

from a genuine desire to please. He likes to be liked — and most of his political enemies are personal friends. One of these was Franklin Roosevelt, who remarked that if “Van” had won the 1936 nomination, the two of them could have stumped the country together in friendly debate. An old schoolmate of the Senator’s remembers, with caustic connotation, that Vandenberg has always wanted to please: “He used to play up to his teachers just as he now plays up to the people he thinks can advance him.”

High on the list of those who can “advance” a political figure is his electorate — and there is no doubt that Vandenberg’s indiscriminate pleasing of people has had its political uses. Few voters were apt to be offended by the editorials he used to write for his *Herald*, damning Bolshevism or Sinclair Lewis’ sacrilegious *Elmer Gantry*, praising Lincoln or the beauties of the Michigan landscape. Few voters were likely to be outraged, later, by a Senate voting record that carried honey on both shoulders by supporting social security, the SEC, restrictions on child labor, and opposing the Wagner Act, the NIRA, the AAA and the TVA. “Social-mindedness, not socialism” is a pet Vandenberg slogan. And he has expressed his political philosophy, quite straightforward, as follows: “I heartily believe that human rights far outweigh property rights in their value and their challenge, tempered always with the reservation that property rights are among the greatest of human

rights and that you can’t have the latter without the former.”

Yet, up to two years ago, there was one big issue on which Vandenberg had stood sturdily inflexible and unfuzzy. That, of course, was his Midwestern isolationism. Back in 1934-35, he was a convinced and active member of the Nye Committee which blamed World War I on J. P. Morgan & Co. and the munitions-making “merchants of death.” In 1939, after the Nazis invaded Poland, he opined: “This so-called war is nothing but about twenty-five people and propaganda. . . . They want our money and men.” He voted against the peacetime draft and against Lend-Lease. He led the losing fight against repeal of the arms embargo. It was not until World War II was almost won that Vandenberg had his historic change of heart. He himself has laid his sudden apostasy to “the robot bomb,” but there are those who wonder if he was not simply trying, once more, to please. Regardless of whether he was trying to, he did.

And in so doing, he reduced his record of political consistency to a single fact. For better than fifty years he has been, consistently, a Republican.

II

The legend has it that young Arthur Vandenberg was admonished to “always be a Republican” by father Aaron’s dying words. Aaron, a de-

scendant of early Dutch settlers in northern New York, had moved to Grand Rapids, where Arthur was born, had built up a small fortune as a harness-maker, and had then been completely ruined in the Cleveland panic of 1893 — a disaster for which he ever after held the Democratic party directly and almost deliberately to blame. Arthur, then only nine years old, went to work delivering small freight with a pushcart after school hours. A year later he had three small boys doing the pushing for him and was taking in, as entrepreneur, about \$20 a week. He has supported himself ever since.

At Central High School, the outlines of the future man began to emerge with surprising clarity. He broke his nose three times at football and baseball; then eschewing outdoor sports, as he has ever since, he started to spend his spare time reading. At 15 he was going through the *Congressional Record* daily, a practice which he continued for more than a quarter of a century. Among the many books he read was a biography of Alexander Hamilton. This so fired him with an historical hero-worship, due to last for years, that he won second prize in a high-school oratorical contest with an impassioned speech on Hamilton. Convinced then of his flair for platform performance, he continued to indulge it until his school-mates, aware also of his ambition for public office, nicknamed him "the Senator from Michigan." Meanwhile, he was still supporting himself on the

side — and one of his several jobs was as copy-boy for the Grand Rapids *Herald*, on which he was soon to make his name and fortune.

He stayed with the *Herald* for a year after graduation, tried a year of law at the University of Michigan, and came back to the *Herald* as a cub reporter in 1902, just when Frank Knox was also joining the same paper's junior staff. A political beat gave Vandenberg his first unbookish contact with politics and politicians. An excess of writing energy led him to contribute — and sell — several conventionally corny short stories to *Lippincott's* and other magazines. In these Virtue always triumphed over Sin; and in one of them Vandenberg may have revealed a deep and thwarted desire when he wrote — for the first-person hero of "The Shrewdness of Hawkins" — "I myself am a scribe, but the necessity for an assured weekly income long ago drove me into newspaper work, at the expense of absolute forfeiture of loftier ambitions." Perhaps it was such ambitions that took Vandenberg to New York and a job with *Collier's* magazine. If so, they faded fast; he quit in a year.

He was back once more with the *Herald* in 1906 when that paper was bought by a local politico named William Alden Smith. Smith, a flag-waving, tub-thumping type, soon to become U. S. Senator, knew and liked young Vandenberg — and *vice versa*. Not so many mornings later, Smith walked in to find 23-year-old Vandenberg sitting at the editor's

desk. "I'm here to stay," announced Vandenberg.

He stayed — for more than twenty years.

Editor Vandenberg is remembered by his underlings of those days as a "cold fish," "pompous and aloof," who, on his rare visits to the city room, "strode through like a Roman senator." He paid little attention to the news columns, regarded the comics as a necessary nuisance, doted on Edgar Guest's poems (the *Herald* was the second U. S. paper to print them), and saw to it that the allegedly open forum published only letters which agreed with the views expressed in the *Herald's* editorials. Those editorials were Vandenberg's real love. He pecked them out, single-spaced, on a portable typewriter while tossing a constant chain of cigar butts behind the office radiator. (He still burns up cigars — now denicotinized.) As he wrote, his typewriter was flanked by a dictionary, a Bible, and a thesaurus, all well-thumbed; his writing style, like his speaking style, was florid, old-fashioned, alliterative and painfully polysyllabic.

One of his editorials, on Liberty bonds, copped an *Editor and Publisher* prize; several were quoted by the now defunct *Literary Digest*. Among those which won neither a prize nor a quotation were several high-minded plugs for prohibition at the peak of its political popularity; a patriotic number hailing World War I as "the greatest revival the world has known

since Christ came upon this earth"; a defense of capital punishment, based on the sexy Snyder-Gray murder case and entitled "Sin and Justice — Both Naked"; and a Republican homily that stated, in rare simplicity: "With Harding at the helm, we can sleep nights."

Meanwhile, he was not neglecting his outside writing or his preparatory politicking. Along with his singable tribute to Bebe Daniels and a poem called "Heart's Gold" that appeared in *Collier's*, he sweated out three sizable tomes, two about his old hero, Hamilton, and an isolationist exposition of American foreign policy. *Alexander Hamilton, the Greatest American* was dismissed by the *American Historical Review* as "an amateurish survey of Hamilton's life and qualities, couched in the language of conventional eulogy." The other two were on the same level, and the *New York Times* wryly described the style of one as "flamboyant." Today, Vandenberg, by a typical switch, sees the greatest American as "a type, not a person. He is the American who fears God, pays his taxes, takes part in public affairs, cares for his family and dies decent." Today, mention of the books almost embarrasses Vandenberg; he attributes them to youthful exuberance, although he was 37 years old when the first of them appeared.

On the political side, Vandenberg did far better. In 1910 he was elected to the Grand Rapids Charter Commission; in 1912 he became a member

of the Republican State Central Committee; in 1916, already a seasoned campaign speaker, he chairmanned the Republican State Convention. When war came Vandenberg was a widower with three small children (he has since remarried) so, instead of enlisting, he made hundreds of speeches for Liberty Loan drives. By 1920 he could accurately if immodestly list himself in *Who's Who* as: "Widely known as a popular and political orator." After a bit of preliminary fence-sitting, he joined the fight against the League of Nations, became friendly, through copious correspondence, with Senators Lodge and Borah, and helped write some of the foreign-relations sections for the campaign speeches of another Midwestern editor — Warren G. Harding.

Now a big frog in a small puddle, Vandenberg yearned for bigger puddles to conquer — so obviously that a Lansing newspaper made simultaneous fun of his ambitions and his stiffly immaculate way of dressing: "He may not be senatorial timber, but he sure is sartorial timber." But wise old Frank M. Sparks, who was then Vandenberg's political mentor, especially in the vital matter of timing (and who later succeeded to the editorship of the *Herald*), advised his protégé to wait a little longer. In 1926, Sparks ran Fred Green's successful campaign for the Michigan governorship. In the spring of 1928, Sparks collected on one bet and paid off on another by demanding of Green that Vandenberg be appointed to a sudden

U. S. Senate vacancy. Vandenberg got the job, kept it easily in the election of that boom-time November, and has held it ever since.

But a Senate seat was not all that Vandenberg took from the small puddle of Grand Rapids to the big puddle of Washington. That same year, the former pushcart boy sold the stock he had acquired in the *Herald* for well over half a million dollars.

III

As a freshman Senator, Vandenberg was far from popular. He posed and pontificated; the press called him "the pouter pigeon with the kewpie smile" and alleged that he could strut sitting down. He was suspected of purely personal motives when, as one of the "Young Turks," he tried to oust GOP diehards like Moses and Smoot and Watson from top Senate posts. But Borah liked him and helped him to important committee assignments (and when Borah died, Vandenberg moved sentimentally and, he hoped, symbolically into Borah's dusky old office). Gradually, fellow Senators began to melt to the affability behind Vandenberg's pompous front, and to admire his conscientiousness and his industry. He proved the former when, single-handed, he forced Congress to obey the Constitution by redistricting congressional seats according to changing population — a job left undone since 1920. He illustrated the latter when, on a typical senatorial junket to the Phil-

ippines, he snorted to would-be entertainers that he had come "to work, not play."

After the New Deal came in, Vandenberg was here, there, and everywhere — shifting ground frequently, contradicting himself occasionally, and generally approving of "objectives" but not of "methods." He voted against most Administration measures, especially new and higher taxes. He won victories over the New Deal in personal vendettas against the Passamaquoddy power project and the Florida ship canal. But he actually sponsored Federal deposit insurance, introduced an anti-child-labor amendment, and went along on milder reforms like the SEC. On civil liberties, his record was impeccable (and it later included support of the FEPC and of Federal anti-lynching bills). His own definition of his domestic middle-of-the-roadness, in a *Saturday Evening Post* article in 1937, was "sane and sympathetic liberalism grounded in sound and unsundered constitutionalism."

But on foreign affairs, Vandenberg veered only rarely and almost imperceptibly from the classic course of complete isolationism. He did favor the World Court; he did put through a resolution terminating the 1911 commercial treaty with Japan (a move which Walter Lippmann called "the longest step on the road to war . . . since . . . 1915"); he did demand withdrawal of recognition from the USSR after Russia invaded Finland (and made no such demand about

Germany when the Nazis marched into Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland). But the isolationist bloc knew it could count on "Van" when it came to an important showdown.

Late in 1939, Roosevelt, seeking to help Britain, asked for repeal of the arms embargo. Vandenberg, who had helped draft the embargo and put teeth in it, entered the fray full of fervor and flourishes. He said, among many other things: "Repealing the arms embargo probably won't get us into war. But it's like taking the first drink of whisky. After a while you're drunk." He fought with the zeal of a prohibitionist to keep the United States sober — and in so doing led such disparate commentators as *Time*, the *Nation* and Senator Borah to concede him the 1940 Republican Presidential nomination if he should win his battle. He lost it — and got a high of seventy-six votes at the Philadelphia convention that nominated Willkie. The following year came Pearl Harbor — and Vandenberg went into temporary eclipse.

He must have come to realize, as the war continued, that the Presidency was most unlikely to go, in his time, to an outspoken and unrelenting isolationist; and he still wanted the Presidency. By the summer of 1944, he had settled, with his conscience sufficiently to join with internationalist Senator Austin in proposing a Republican foreign-policy plank that called for an international organization to preserve the coming peace. Wendell Willkie labeled the proposal

— with its cautious insistence on complete national sovereignty — “vague and ambiguous.” Vague and ambiguous it was, but for Vandenberg it was a concession — and a portent.

The speech that, as *Time* put it, “changed history” came on January 10, 1945. Actually, it said very little in a specific way except to propose, as others had proposed before, that the major allies join in a treaty “to keep Germany and Japan permanently demilitarized.” But its overtones made clear that the ranking Republican of the Senate’s Foreign Relations Committee had deserted isolationism. Roosevelt gleefully took fifty copies of the speech along with him to Yalta — and there named its author as one of the U. S. delegates to San Francisco. *Collier’s* later awarded Vandenberg its medal for distinguished senatorial service in 1945. Isolationism was dead — and an ex-isolationist who switched in the nick of time was a national hero.

At San Francisco, Vandenberg served conscientiously on two committees, made no startling contributions except to insist that verbal guarantees of “justice” be written into the UN Charter, and was generally rated the most important U. S. delegate simply because Republican Senate support of the UN hinged on him. At subsequent international sessions, Vandenberg has served primarily to strengthen Byrnes’ hand — especially in firmness toward Russia — and to make bipartisan foreign policy a fact. True, early in 1946, his report on the UN meeting in London was quite

critical of Byrnes for what Vandenberg saw as an over-solicitous coddling of the USSR. But three months later, after the Paris meeting of foreign ministers, Vandenberg was backing Byrnes to the hilt. And after the Republican sweep in November, Vandenberg, as next chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, assured the UN Assembly that no change in party control would change U. S. foreign policy.

It was at the Paris meeting, after a discouraging day, that Vandenberg turned, half-joking, to Vyshinsky and said: “Life was simple for me when I was an isolationist. Another couple of days of this and I’ll be more isolationist than ever.” He will not, of course (unless isolationism becomes popular again during his lifetime). Instead, sporting a convert’s laurels, Vandenberg will go on to a probable secretaryship of state or a possible Presidency.

He would not be a strong President, for it is not in him to be strong. He likes too much to please. But there are those who hold that the best President is not the leader with firm and indomitable principles but the pliable man who seeks to follow the people’s fluctuating will. Vandenberg would be good at that. More honest than Harding, more intelligent than Coolidge, more liberal than Hoover, he would be the ablest Republican President in a third of a century. And if the nation as a whole could do far better than Vandenberg in 1948, the Republican party, judging from its other contenders, could do far worse.

HOW UNRRA BOLSTERED TITO

BY ERIC L. PRIDONOFF

MARSHAL TITO has built up and equipped an army of 750,000, plus more than 100,000 secret service police, with the purpose of establishing and maintaining in Yugoslavia a government closely patterned after that of Soviet Russia. Where did he get the necessary material? Surely not in Yugoslavia, which has been devastated by the war. Tito got his material from the only nation that could supply it, namely, the United States. Of course, he did not get it openly as a gift to build up his totalitarian state. He obtained it through UNRRA. The facts are clear enough. Many of them I obtained myself in Yugoslavia, where I served for a year as economic analyst for our embassy in Belgrade.

How much material aid has actually been sent into Yugoslavia by UNRRA? That question is of vital concern to the people of both Yugoslavia and the United States. "Of course, we have received *some* help from abroad, namely from UNRRA," declared Tito in a speech to the Com-

munist Youth Congress in Zagreb, in June 1946. "But," he continued, "the principal and most substantial aid came from our great ally, the Soviet Union."

Neither I nor my colleagues in the American embassy could ever find any evidence of that "substantial aid," which Tito credited to the Soviet Union, in the form of food, clothing, medicine, livestock, machinery, transportation equipment, coal, oil or any other tangible economic asset. What we did find was an army of Russian officials, spies, political commissars, and soldiers who were living off the ravaged land, dictating every basic move of both foreign and domestic policy, and in the meantime shipping to Russia much of the economic wealth of the country.

The whole of the lower Danube, for example, is now completely in the hands of the Russians. They have confiscated hundreds of barges and other boats from the Yugoslavs as well as from the Rumanians, Hungarians, Bulgarians and Greeks. These boats

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have been busily engaged in removing supplies and equipment from city, farm and factory and floating the confiscated goods down the Danube to the Black Sea. At the port of Belgrade this Russian-ward flow of goods, from bedpans to dismantled industrial plants, was an everyday sight last year.

Numerous complaints against Russian spoliation from Yugoslav villages along the Danube reached us regularly while I was with the American embassy in Belgrade. Those in charge of the Soviet barge convoys seemed to make it a regular habit, in their overnight stops at villages, to steal sheep, hogs, cows, chickens and personal belongings from the inhabitants. Tito's government never once, to my knowledge, registered so much as a protest against the Russians. On the contrary, the people were told that they could never do too much for their Soviet ally.

When the Belgrade region was liberated from the Nazis the German armies had to retreat so rapidly that they had no time to take with them, or to destroy, large stockpiles of food, including 50,000 carloads of wheat and more than 2000 carloads of sugar. When the Russians entered the area north of Belgrade they immediately seized these vast stockpiles of food, and left the citizens none at all. Later the Russians—"generously" returned 10 per cent of the wheat. This was given tremendous publicity in the press and radio to show the Yugoslavs the kindness of the Red Army.

Over and above the fact that the Yugoslavs had to feed for a time a Russian army of 400,000 men as well as helplessly watch while every conceivable type of commodity was being "liberated" and shipped back to Russia, the Tito régime entered into secret trade and barter agreements with the USSR and its other satellite states. For the past two years a large share of Yugoslav sugar, wine, pork, glass, hemp, leather and other products has been sold to Russia at prices which the workers and peasants claimed were below the cost of production. But every complaint was met with the observation, "The Soviets saved us from the German yoke and therefore nothing is too good for the Soviets."

In return, we discovered, the Soviet Union supplied Yugoslavia with chemicals and military equipment. Some of this, our investigation revealed, was Lend-Lease material sent by the United States to the Soviet Union.

I quote the following information given to me by a high government official of the Yugoslav Ministry of Commerce: "All last week the finest Yugoslav tobacco, amounting to 300 carloads, has been loaded into barges to be shipped to the USSR. . . . Last week they also shipped sugar, and now they have started to ship lard and smoked pork. By the end of this month shipments of grain are foreseen. . . . As compensation the Russians are shipping to Yugoslavia matches, chloride and some laundry

soap . . . and United States Lend-Lease military equipment."

This is the reality of the "substantial aid" given to the Yugoslavs by the Soviet Union, for which the people are told by Tito to be so thankful.

II

Let us now examine in detail UNRRA's contribution to Yugoslavia — a contribution to which the United States has given 73 per cent and to which the Soviet Union has contributed nothing more than administrative personnel.

Up to August 1946 the total shipments of UNRRA supplies into Yugoslavia amounted to 3,000,000 tons with a value of \$327,000,000. By the end of this year the tonnage will have grown another half million, and the total value will have reached or exceeded \$400,000,000.

Under the urgent pressure of UNRRA officials in Yugoslavia, the government-controlled press on one occasion admitted the magnitude of UNRRA aid, but of course the Tito régime always soft-pedaled or ignored admissions of this sort. In a report published in *Politika* (a leading pro-Communist daily) on April 20, 1946, Colonel Sergeichik, the Russian head of UNRRA in Yugoslavia, stated that up to April 15 UNRRA had brought into the country 979,339 metric tons of food. The major categories were:

614,729 metric tons of grain
26,633 metric tons of meat
23,693 metric tons of sugar

44,105 metric tons of milk
19,696 metric tons of pork fats
9,420 metric tons of grease and oils.

In other words, UNRRA had been shipping in enough food to give every man, woman and child slightly more than 150 pounds of food a year.

To this must be added some 60,000 metric tons of cotton, wool, finished cloth and clothing, or approximately 9 pounds of textiles per person. For a man this can be computed to mean: 2 pairs of trousers, 2 shirts, 3 union suits, 6 pairs of socks, 1 sweater, 1 overcoat and 6 handkerchiefs.

Medical supplies totaling 8518 metric tons also had reached Yugoslavia by that time, according to the same article in *Politika*, or enough to supply each of Yugoslavia's 15,000,000 people with 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ pounds. Nor must we forget the 28,000,000 gallons of gasoline; the more than 12,000 trucks; the 75,000 tons of coal; the tractors and other agricultural implements; the saw mills, the mining and railroad equipment, and a host of other vital commodities. Tito grudgingly referred to all this as "*some* help from UNRRA."

The statistical fact is that in terms of the total economy of the country, Yugoslavia has already received as a gift goods equal in sales value to several years of its total prewar national budget, and to three full years of its gross national income. Yugoslavia has thus been saved from complete collapse, despite Soviet depredation, only by the movement of UNRRA supplies into the country.

III

Let us now analyze more closely how Tito was able to turn the generosity of the American, British, Canadian and Latin American peoples into an effective weapon for strengthening his own régime.

Conditions in devastated Yugoslavia were so bad during the winter and spring of 1944-45 that people by the hundreds were dropping dead in the villages from hunger and cold. At that very time a number of United States ships, laden with food, clothing and medicine, were in Italian ports, awaiting permission from Tito to bring in these much-needed supplies to Yugoslavia. Tito refused to allow these supplies to reach his starving people until he had obtained complete control over their distribution. He demanded that a Soviet representative head the UNRRA mission to Yugoslavia. Thus it was that Colonel Mihail Sergeichik, an able administrator, smooth diplomat, and loyal Stalinite took over the reigns of UNRRA.

UNRRA was, at the start, largely staffed by American and British personnel. Many of them were genuinely humanitarian; some were mere opportunists who saw in UNRRA a chance for bigger salaries than they had ever made before. There was also a very considerable sprinkling of Communists, or Communist sympathizers, who viewed the entire operation of UNRRA as a huge commissary to be dipped into as often and as

deeply as possible by the pro-Soviet forces. To this latter element, no request from Tito, or his subordinates, was ever to be questioned.

We in the American embassy, as well as a few correspondents, saw what was going on, but were largely helpless to act. Several of the decent and able UNRRA officials resigned in disgust, but as quickly as they stepped out Colonel Sergeichik replaced them with Russians. According to the most recent information I have, of the top thirteen representatives of UNRRA in Yugoslavia, nine are Russians. They hold the key positions in the transportation and distribution of the UNRRA supplies.

Attempts to verify the actual need for the supplies being shipped into the country were usually met with Sergeichik's smiling refusal. "After all," he would say, "the poor Yugoslavs have suffered *so much!* No matter what they ask for, *we* should give it to them." It was pointless to remind him that not one ounce of these supplies came from Russia.

Later, when Mr. Herbert Lehman, as international head of UNRRA, paid a two-day visit to Yugoslavia to check up on matters there, the régime saw to it that he was taken only to the proper places, and introduced only to those UNRRA workers they wanted him to meet.

La Guardia, too, visited Yugoslavia for several days. Instead of personally investigating conditions, he watched parades. Later, he flew over certain areas of Yugoslavia.

During the year that I was in Yugoslavia, Tito's government refused to permit UNRRA inspectors to check on the textile factories, rebuilt or repaired by UNRRA-donated equipment. Nor were they allowed to check on the disposition of the finished products of those mills, which were being fabricated from UNRRA-donated cotton, wool and synthetic fibers.

Colonel Sergeichik regularly upheld the orders of the Tito régime. Soon after the textile mills began functioning, Yugoslav Army officers began strutting about the streets of Belgrade in new uniforms. But the civilian population became more shabby than ever.

My position as economic analyst to our embassy, coupled with my travels about the country (helped immeasurably by my ability to speak Russian and Serbo-Croatian, for many of the Soviet and Yugoslav officers thought I was one of "their" boys), gave me a chance at first-hand inspection of two of the textile mills. It was clear that these mills were producing materials almost solely for the Russian and Yugoslav armies — not for the Yugoslav people.

My own observations were later substantiated by a responsible UNRRA official. He said to another of the American embassy officials and me, "They would not let me visit the factory, but I found a way to get in. And, as has been reported, I found the mills were producing only military cloth."

IV

The 12,000 trucks which UNRRA gave to Yugoslavia have, in the main, also been diverted from what was supposed to be their main use — to improve civilian transport — to that of moving supplies and soldiers of Tito's army about the country. Many trucks were attached to the army and functioned for it exclusively. At first, this was only done in regions of the country far from the capital. Later, they were used right in Belgrade.

UNRRA trucks were also frequently used to transport civilians as well as army personnel in the many forced-attendance demonstrations arranged by the Tito régime. These I witnessed in many parts of the country. I have in my possession photographic evidence of the military use of UNRRA trucks.

There can be no doubt that the whole of the Yugoslav army and air force was maintained on our supplies.

We gave Yugoslavia twelve completely equipped and up-to-date radio stations. This was admitted in the government newspaper *Borba* of February 11, 1946. These stations were immediately taken over by the military.

We gave 4500 tractors and other farm equipment to help rebuild the country. How many of these actually reached the farmers I do not know, but I did see several of them in operation on the Yugoslav military air field at Zagreb.

I know that Tito and all his high

officials rode about in beautiful cars; that they had plenty of gasoline; that they were very well dressed; and that they had plenty of coal to keep themselves warm. I know that most of these supplies came from UNRRA. I know, too, that in the American embassy we shivered and froze for lack of coal. Next door to me lived the Communist Minister for Slovenia. I saw him get thirty tons of UNRRA coal (which had been shipped from America), delivered in an American built, UNRRA-given truck, powered by American UNRRA-given gasoline.

Medical supplies, given to the Yugoslavs either by UNRRA or the Red Cross, were used as a political whip. Only those who were loyal to the régime were permitted to get any. Time and time again, sick people came to us in the United States embassy, asking for medical aid. Unfortunately, all we could do was to refer them to UNRRA. UNRRA, in turn, sent them to the government clinics, but there, unless the citizen was of the proper political "color," he or she was brusquely refused any medical supplies.

V

Many Americans believe that UNRRA supplies were given free to the people of the devastated countries. Such was hardly the case. UNRRA permitted and endorsed the practice of selling these supplies to the people. But they were to be sold by the various governments, it was assumed, at the normal

cost of production. In this way people would pay for what they got, and at the same time the bankrupt governments would obtain money which could then be used for industrial rehabilitation.

What actually happened in Yugoslavia was that the Communists were able to do as they pleased with UNRRA supplies. Through summary executions Tito wiped out the domestic black market as well as almost every avenue of legitimate trade — and set up his own government-controlled markets. People could buy UNRRA supplies only at these markets, at prices which were from three to thirty times normal prices. In this way Tito obtained the wherewithal to equip and support an army which has put every eighth man in uniform. Even our country could hardly afford to keep such a vast manpower idle. Tito did it on UNRRA.

To verify these facts I refer to the columns of Tito's own newspapers, such as *Politika*, *Borba*, *Glas*, and the *Official Gazette*, from June 1945 through June 1946. Here is what they report in terms of current prices: Bread costs $3\frac{1}{2}$ times as much as before the war; yarn, 3 to $3\frac{1}{2}$; wool cloth, 3; thread, $2\frac{1}{2}$; glass, $2\frac{1}{2}$; coffee, 5; chocolate, 5; meat, 5; sugar, 15 to 30; clothing (general), 4 to 5; men's suits, 7; and winter coats, 8.

It must be borne in mind that the overwhelming mass of each of these items has been supplied free by UNRRA. So for every one hundred million dollars' worth of goods we

have been sending over to Yugoslavia, Tito's régime has collected nearly \$600,000,000 without cost to itself.

People must eat. They must have clothes. They must keep from freezing to death. UNRRA has supplied the wherewithal, as I have shown earlier in this article, to fill these needs adequately for the 15,000,000 people of Yugoslavia. But Tito, with the aid of Russia and through our own blindness, has taken over control of these supplies. With them he has re-equipped and strengthened his army. With them he has kept his own political machine well fed, well clothed,

well housed. With them he has plundered the people of Yugoslavia, forcing them to give up their belongings and their freedom to keep alive.

And while he has been doing this, his army of propagandists has conducted a violent campaign against the United States and the other Western democracies. When hungry people protested against the high prices they had to pay for food, clothes and medicine, his government-controlled newspapers said, "Well, there is capitalism for you! Isn't it terrible to think that rich Americans should force us to pay such outrageous prices!"



TOLERANT

BY LOUIS FRANKLIN OVERSTREET

WITH alien gods
I walk along
the zig-zag path
of darkness
and of light,

and see about me
everywhere
sweet magic
I never glimpsed
in youth —

when I was single-minded
and knew I knew the Truth.

HAITI'S ECONOMIC BONDAGE

BY BERNARD SEEMAN

ON JULY 29, 1915, an American warship steamed into the outer harbor of Port-au-Prince, capital of Haiti, and a regiment of U. S. Marines landed, ostensibly to "protect lives and property." Their actual accomplishment was to transform Haiti into an unofficial U. S. possession.

For thirty-one years Haiti's presidents have been handpicked by the State Department in Washington, and its internal economy has been governed by United States interests, both governmental and private. The results are far from savory. Under the American ægis, government in Haiti has been corrupt and expensive, providing little public service in return. One of the few liberal Haitian senators, Max L. Hudicourt, has said of the situation: "The economic influence of this predatory foreign group is determining the national life of Haiti. Possessors of all the private capital, they hide behind the puppet politicians, both mulatto and black, whom they control and through whom they maintain and increase their own economic power."

Senator Hudicourt's charges describe conditions familiar from the days of Dollar Diplomacy in Latin America. But whereas the Good Neighbor policy of Franklin Roosevelt has supplanted the earlier policy of political intervention for economic exploitation over most of South America, Haiti continues in bondage to the United States.

In August 1946, Deputy Dumarsais Estimé was elected to the presidency of Haiti and a new government was installed. The new government gives indication of some liberal tendencies, but it is questionable how liberal the dominant American economic interests will permit it to be.

II

The population of Haiti comprises some three million Negroes, a small but influential minority of mulattoes, and a few thousand whites, most of them Americans. The whites hold the economic power.

For generations the bulk of Haiti's population has lived on the brink of

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economic bankruptcy, chained to a primitive agricultural colonialism and exploited by foreign interests and a small native ruling group. There has been little opportunity for independent political thinking to develop. Public education has been almost entirely neglected, with the result that 80 per cent of the population is illiterate. According to Senator Hudicourt, 85 per cent of school-age children do not attend school.

From 1916 to 1934, an American-imposed treaty dictated that Haitian government income be disbursed along the following lines: The first legal expenditure was for payment of the salaries and expenses of the General Receiver (who was appointed by the President of the United States to supervise Haitian customs) and his staff. Then came payment on the debt to the American banks. These debt payments, according to the most recent figures, ate up about 25 per cent of the total national revenue. Next was the cost of the police, the *Garde d'Haiti*. Only after these costs were met could appropriations be made for public works and services. At this point very little remained of the country's revenue.

Since 1934 this pattern of government expenditure has continued with only minor modifications. The General Receiver was replaced by an American-appointed Fiscal Agency, which in turn had its functions taken over by an Administrative Council for the National Bank of Haiti. By agreement with the United States, three

members of this six-man council, which controls government finance, are Americans designated by the President of the United States.

At the same time the burden of taxes on the Haitian people has steadily mounted. The United States Tariff Commission stated in a report in 1946: "Largely as a result of the government's heavy use of import duties for revenue, the national tax structure tends to be regressive, the burden falling most heavily on those with low incomes."

Since Haitian presidents have been able to hold power only by grace of United States sponsorship and protection, they have been more representative of American than of Haitian interests. With the passage of time Haitian governments have grown increasingly corrupt. A great portion of the blame for this corruption must necessarily fall upon the private American interests who customarily bribe and subvert Haitian officials in exchange for special privileges.

Private enterprises in Haiti, like government finances, are almost wholly dominated by Americans. To quote from a report by the United States Tariff Commission: ". . . at the present time there are only a few plantations (sugar cane, sisal and banana), all operated by United States companies." In addition to these plantations, American companies hold monopolies on electric light and power, the railroad system, fruit and sugar exports, loading and unloading facilities on the quays, and indeed on

most enterprises vital to Haiti's economy.

In 1939, for example, during the Vincente presidency, the Electric Light Company, an American concern, extended its monopoly for a period of fifty years. Five senators and deputies admitted later that they had been offered bribes to vote for the extension but claimed that they had refused them. One deputy admitted in writing that he had received money, excusing himself by saying that he had turned it over to the church in his native city of Cayes. Again, six weeks after the Treaty of Chapultepec, which provided that no American republic should grant monopolies to foreign companies, the Lescot government gave the Standard Fruit Company a ten-year monopoly on the export of Haitian fruits. As part of the deal, Lescot guaranteed to protect the company against loss due to crop failures, falling world prices and other unpredictables; all losses were to be borne by the Haitian planters.

In addition to selling monopolies, the Haitian politicians keep the prices of their products low in order to make the monopolies they sell more profitable to the purchaser. Bananas are the major product in the Standard Fruit monopoly; in Haiti they cost half of what they do in Jamaica, the nearby English colony. At a time when a ton of sugar cane sold for \$3.00 to \$3.40 in Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, the Haitian price was fixed by President

Lescot at \$1.80 per ton. As an additional measure to keep costs low, President Lescot, whose salary was \$36,000, decreed that the wages of agricultural workers be fixed at 30 cents a day, whereas in Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, the wage for sugar-cane cutters ranged from 70 cents a day upward. These price-fixing decrees directly affected the overwhelming majority of the Haitians, most of whom live on small individually-owned farms.

The Haitian standard of living is, as might be expected, miserably low. The United States Tariff Commission reported in 1945: "Nine-tenths of the people live on a basis of practical self-sufficiency." At present, according to available statistics, the average individual's purchasing power is \$7 per year.

With virtually no domestic market to strive for, and with the foreign market largely in the hands of monopolies which buy at prices far below those prevailing in the world market, Haitian agriculture cannot rise above a primitive, marginal level. Similarly, any development of native middle-class industry is severely inhibited from the start. Yet Haiti possesses many raw materials, among them lumber, iron, sulphur, copper, silver, gold, gypsum, kaolin and limestone. Recently, large aluminum deposits were discovered. These resources are at present undeveloped, while production is concentrated on coffee, cotton, sugar, sisal, bananas and cacao, products which are shipped abroad

after primary processing. It has been estimated that in twenty years the Haitian peasants sold a million tons of raw cotton to foreign processors for the sum of \$32,000,000. During that same period, Haiti imported 750,000 tons of cotton goods at a cost of some \$80,000,000.

In short, Haiti's history for the past thirty years has been characterized by exploitation for which the United States is solely responsible.

III

Haiti's economic bondage dates from the time of the Marines' landing in July of 1915.¹ Prior to 1915, a minority of a few thousand mulattoes, the gentry of the republic, dominated the political scene. With French, German and American investors constantly jockeying for economic privileges, and consequently supporting opposing political factions within the ruling class, Haiti was in constant turmoil, with periodic upheavals deposing one president after another.

In 1914, the government of President Zamor was overthrown after the news leaked out that he had been negotiating with the American minister for a treaty giving the United States control of Haitian customs. Zamor's successor, President Theodore, was refused recognition by the United States, and Admiral William B. Caperton, commander of our naval forces in the Caribbean, backed a successful revolt against Theodore by General Sam. Five months later the

General's government was overthrown and he was killed. It was on the same day that a regiment of American marines and bluejackets landed from an American warship and took over the capital.

The Admiral then sent a message to the Secretary of the Navy in which he set the tone for future American preference in the matter of Haitian presidential candidates. Caperton said of Senator Dartiguenave, who was later elected president: "Has never been connected with any revolution, is of good ability, and anxious for Haiti's regeneration, realizes that Haiti must agree to terms laid down by the United States . . . says he will use all his influence with Haitian congress to have such terms agreed upon by Haiti. If elected, must be sustained by American protection."

The American military occupation of Haiti thus begun was not to end until 1934.

Following the "election" of an "amenable" president, the United States took over financial control of Haiti by means of a ten-year treaty proclaimed on May 3, 1916. This provided that the United States was to "aid the Haitian government in the proper and efficient development of its agricultural, mineral and commercial resources and in the establishment of the finances of Haiti on a firm and solid basis." Other articles of the treaty forbade Haiti from borrowing money without the consent of the United States, made it impossible for her to modify her customs and

in general nullified Haitian sovereignty. The Haitian army was dissolved and in its place a constabulary was "organized and officered by Americans, appointed by the President of Haiti, upon nomination of the President of the United States." The Haitian customs, which supplied the bulk of the government income, were taken over by the United States through the appointment of a General Receiver empowered to "collect, receive and apply all customs duties on imports and exports. . . ." The President of the United States also nominated a Financial Advisor who was attached to the Haitian Ministry of Finance and who, in effect, was to control the ministry.

In 1917, the United States granted a loan to Haiti under terms which extended the life of the 1916 treaty to 1934, eight years beyond its original expiration date. During the life of this treaty Haiti was governed by dictatorships, despite the existence of a constitution guaranteeing some rights to the people. In 1935, following the expiration of the Treaty of 1917 and the end of military occupation, President Stenio Vincente rendered the situation a little less farcical by drawing up a new constitution recognizing his dictatorship and prolonging his tenure in office. The constitution was approved by a plebiscite held after all opposition had been terrorized, imprisoned or driven into exile. American interests were helpful here too, because Vincente had already acted to continue the ef-

fects of the Treaty of 1917 by placing Haitian revenues and finances in the hands of a Fiscal Agency appointed by the President of the United States.

Article 14 of the new charter sets forth the contradictory principle upon which the present Haitian state is formed: "The government of Haiti is republican and democratic. It functions through the executive power directed by a president possessed with the public power, under the authority of which function the various organs of the state and which is assisted by the legislative and judiciary branches." In other words, the president has sole power; the legislature and courts are merely his "assistants."

Article 31 enunciates the principle that "the president of the Republic personifies the Nation."

Vincente, utilizing all of the weapons of dictatorship, remained in power until 1941. A large part of his personal fortune was deposited in Belgium. The Nazis froze all bank deposits there in 1941, but Vincente's holdings were freed after a suspiciously short period, a fact which strongly suggested the possibility of a deal between Vincente and the Nazis.

With American backing, Elie Lescot, Haitian Minister in Washington, succeeded Vincente. The election proceedings were characteristic. Those Haitians who attempted to support a candidate other than Lescot were beaten and tortured. Deputies were warned by the police that if they did not support Lescot they would be punished by him at his convenience.

The vote of the legislature was just short of unanimous.

Lescot's term in office was to have expired in January 1945. In April 1944, the controlled legislature revised the constitution, which it had no legal right to do, and extended Lescot's mandate for an additional seven years. In January 1946 there were mass demonstrations against Lescot. Elements of the Haitian upper class, in alliance with liberal forces, took the initiative. Colonel Lavaud, chief of the *Guarde d'Haiti*, joined the movement against Lescot, and Haiti's president was arrested.

IV

Following the deposal of Lescot, who was permitted to flee with his family and a sizable fortune, the military controlled the government until the August elections. During a great part of that period, Haiti enjoyed an interval of relative political freedom, as a result of which a disorganized, confusing welter of political groups sprang into being, most of them small, comparatively unimportant and representing little more than Haiti's repressed and immature yearnings for genuine independence.

One party, however, aside from the official group represented by president-elect Estimé, gave promise of having some future in Haitian affairs. This was the Popular Socialist party. It elected the liberal Max L. Hudicourt to the senate, and its candidate for the presidency, Deputy Edgar Nere Numa, showed surprising strength. The Popular Socialist platform advocates reduction of government costs and salaries, full public education, wage and hour laws, economic and tax reforms and many other forward-looking proposals.

The election of Estimé to the presidency leaves open to speculation the question of whether or not Haiti is at last to have a free and honest government. Estimé's political past is none too encouraging: it is charged that he was closely associated with many of the corrupt practices of the preceding régimes, and that many of the votes which elected him were bought at the prevailing rate of \$3000 each. It should be noted, however, that Estimé has organized a government in which nearly all parties are represented. It is still true that the real hope of a politically and economically free Haiti rests, not with Estimé, but with the United States.



THE FACE ON THE BARROOM FLOOR

A Story

By NELSON ALGREN

A LONG generation ago, back in the twisted twenties when Chicago was still a dangerous city, a mild-mannered youth called Fancy used to tend bar in a dingy speakeasy on the wrong side of Van Buren Street. He pleased the women of the third-rate burlesques, as well as those of the curtained brothels, by mixing flattery with easy credit. When asked for a shot on the cuff he would answer reflectively, "I wouldn't want such a good-lookin' girl like you to be goin' down State Street thirsty," and would pay for the drink himself.

To this lopsided shambles, where the lighting was so dim that all faces looked alike, no police ever came. For Brother B., whose speakeasy it was, avoided police attention by locking the doors and drawing the shutters whenever a fight began. So although there were frequent brawls, they were never accompanied by the sort of excitement which might attract passers-by; only the steady thudding of the fans overhead and the desperate scuffle of shoes would be heard when two thieves fought along the floor.

Suddenly it would be done, and the half-muted babble of voices would rise over the fans' steady thudding. Brother B. would be pulling up the shutters and the mild-mannered youth would be unlocking the doors. And everyone, victor and vanquished, would be having a shot on the house. The juke would begin again and everyone would feel that something had at last been achieved that day.

"Let's see what them damned rum-dums are up to at Brother B.'s tonight," the peep-show cuties would say after the last show. "I'd rather see a fight than a floor-show any time. Maybe there'll be a *good* fight tonight."

If a man were hurt so seriously that he could not rise even to drink, and if no one else volunteered to take charge of him, Brother B. would personally pour a shot down his throat, hoist him like a potato sack over his shoulder and carry him out the rear entrance. There, secretly beneath the curved steel of the El, beneath the endless ties, Brother B. would deposit the fellow, upright and gently, in the alley entrance of Greek Steve's

NELSON ALGREN has had stories reprinted in the O'Brien and O. Henry anthologies. The Neon Wilderness, a collection which includes this story, will be published soon.

Bar. For Steve paid for protection and Brother B. did not: Steve would put it on his account with the law, and Brother B. would perjure himself for Steve the next time Steve got in trouble by himself.

That was how it was. That was the way it had always been. "And so," Brother B. explained to Fancy, "that's how it's always going to be."

Yet all the fights were unnecessary, except insofar as they saved Brother B. the money he might otherwise have had to spend for entertainers; and not one of them ever solved anything. The rumdums of Brother B.'s speakeasy fought, it appeared, solely for their honor; because Polack Frank had called Dago John the worst thief on the street: "You couldn't get your hand in a flour-barrel"; or because Nick Zingo had said outright, before everyone, that Jew Schiff's girl-friend was a worn-out tramp. They fought for their self-respect. Jew Schiff's tramp, as he proved on the spot, with his bare hands and the help of a broken salt-shaker, was not even nearly worn-out: "And she'll bring in more on a Sunday afternoon in Oak Park than your missus could hustle right here on the street in a month of Saturday nights."

Actually, they fought to fill the emptiness of their lives as they filled their empty glasses. They fought not because the liquor was in them but because it did not fill them enough. Because there wasn't enough whisky on South State to fill the emptiness of a single lost man of them all. The

twisted, bitter taste of defeat parched their throats, and they blamed it on Brother B.'s pretzels.

"Too much salt on the pretzels, Brother B.," they claimed.

"That's what gives the boys a thirst," Brother B. explained. "That's why the mustard bowls is always full too."

Nobody *had* to eat the free lunch, that was true. But no one was going to eat it without getting a raging thirst out of it; not so long as Brother B. was in business.

Therefore it was only when a man stood up unassisted to the bar, while the fallen one was being supported there from the floor, that he tasted the sweet and fleeting taste of victory. Sometimes it seemed that a man who, ordinarily, would need a pint to get high, needed only a couple of double shots and a triumph to be drunk.

To be drunk, to be forever drunk; when the unlabeled whisky failed a man, a conquest could quicken his blood instead.

II

The worst brawl of all was the most unnecessary, and the least expected. It involved the two men seemingly least equipped, of any thereabouts, to fight anybody. And when it was done, Brother B. put the chairs on the tables, drew the shutters for the last time, sprinkled a little sawdust along the floor, and closed his doors for keeps.

It began in the forenoon heat of the

hottest mid-August the city had ever known, in a joking conversation between Fancy and a round-shouldered little peep-show peeler, from the "Peek-holes of Paris" across the street, who called herself Venus Darling.

"Some duke was just in askin' for you, Venus," Fancy teased the girl. "Name of Rudolf somethin' — Valentino I think he said — how'd I remember it? Said you 'n' him had a little quarrel 'n' he wanted to patch it up. Had two messenger boys carryin' flowers. Said he'd be back in a half hour."

"Tell Rudy not to bother me no more when he comes back," Venus requested modestly, "tell him we're quits." And added seriously, "What would I want a oil-hair spook like that for anyhow, Fancy? Ain't I got the best man breathin'? What's any of them movie creeps got that Railroad Shorty ain't got?"

Fancy could have answered, "Two legs." For among the women of the brothels and burlesques Venus enjoyed a unique distinction: Railroad Shorty was a legless man. Her distinction was as great as though she had been a murderer's mistress.

"You know what they say about bein' lucky in love," she coaxed Fancy now, "how's my credit today, Honey-Hush?"

"You call me 'Honey-Hush' when you want credit," Fancy complained, "but when you got the price all I hear is 'One double shot comin' up, Four-Eyes.' How is *that*?"

"I'm just fickle, Honey-Hush," she

told him. "One day I feel one way 'n' the next I feel just the opposite. I never know, one day to the next, what kinda person I'm gonna feel like I am tomorrow."

"It's all right," he assured her softly, dropping his eyes as though she had said something he had had no right to hear. "We're all wrong around here. It's the life we live, the life we all live." Then, to bring the conversation back to a kidding level: "I understand Railroad is a pretty good man with the women," he suggested, and leered heavily.

"You guys with legs ain't even in the same league with him," the girl answered coolly, adding salt to the beer.

"Is that where he gets his money then?" Fancy asked with mild wonder, thinking half to himself.

"Ain't you askin' a lot for a single beer?"

Fancy wiped his hands on the bar towel and apologized weakly, "I was only kiddin', Venus."

"I hope to Christ you were," she said — and sloshed the beer deliberately over the bar he'd just wiped, and was gone.

"What got into *that* one?" Brother B. asked.

"She's in a high-wheeled huff about somethin'," Fancy answered vaguely, drying the bar deliberately, wishing she hadn't come in at all.

"People just don't know my Shorty," Venus was complaining to the ticket-taker at the "Paris." "He don't take no cryin' dime off *any*

woman, he ain't built like that. 'N' people who go around sayin' he does, they just don't know how sensitive my Shorty can get. They don't know how high-strung my Shorty is. They don't know what *pride* that man got. I'll tell you what, Honey-Hush, right there is the proudest man on earth, that's all."

The ticket-taker did not appear to hear. She was sixty cents over and was being dimly pleased with herself for having short-changed somebody without realizing it.

But she heard all the same.

III

The legless man had no need of any woman's money. He was a person of endless versatility and unfailing resources. He was a cardsharp of such cunning that not a dive on the street would hire him to deal, for the suckers pushed their chairs back when Shorty mounted himself to the table with 'anybody's deck. He had never been detected slipping a card; but nobody is quicker than a sucker at sensing something wrong, even when he can't put a finger on what it is.

"You know your business too good," Brother B. once advised him. "I don't want to catch you on the con in here — not even matching pennies. I got to perfect my customers. They come here to drink 'n' fight 'n' eat them good old pretzels." And to show there were no hard feelings, he pushed the pretzel bowl, freshly salted, toward Shorty, and

even lowered it to save the cripple the effort of rising off his platform.

"I know it's tough, Shorty," Brother B. acknowledged. "You're too small to cannon the street-cars 'n' too little to reach a damper. Maybe somebody could boost you through a transom though — you ought to be all right at snatching twists' purses too."

"I got no use for a purse-snatchin' man," Shorty affirmed proudly. "That's plain dirty *stealin'*."

Thus he was a man of singular virtue, and to this single virtue he held fast: no man could accuse him of taking a dime from any woman, by guile or strength or seduction.

But he was a competent mechanic and a good hand to overhaul a hot car in a hurry.

He could preach salvation in a voice so gentle that the mission stiffies would linger on after the doughnuts were passed: he could roar hell-fire at those working toward the doors so fearfully that they would return sheepishly to their seats.

He could mix a drink capable of knocking a man out in a minute, or fix one that wouldn't take effect for five hours.

He could sell a tip on a burned-out horse and sell the same sucker again, an hour after the horse had run out.

He never glanced anxiously about for a clock, for he always knew the time. Although he carried no watch, he could tell you the time within two minutes, any hour of the day or night, rain, sun, fog or snow.

He could guess a man's weight within two pounds merely by lightly touching his clothes once. He was seldom in need of money, and he spent so freely that, on those rare days when he ran short, the tavern boys felt he was holding out on them. "Shorty always got money," they assumed, and would throw spittoons at him in resentment. He would duck the spittoons cheerfully, secretly flattered by their anger. But if one of them tried to kick him he would catch the offending foot and twist it mercilessly in his great hands until his man lay on the floor, wriggling helplessly.

"Look at him now, boys!" Shorty would chortle, rolling in a semicircle on his platform, at a safe distance from his victim's hands. "Wrigglin' like a pig!"

And there would be no more spittoon-tossing for a while.

For on the floor he was murderous. His shoulders belonged to a professional strong-man — as indeed he claimed he had once been. "I had a act with Strangler Lewis in the old days," he asserted. "All it was was him gettin' a strangle on me 'n' gettin' out of it 'n' then me gettin' a nelson on him 'n' him not bein' able to get out of it. Zybyzsko couldn't get out of my nelson, in the old days."

At night he would unstrap his hips, leap onto the bed in a single jump, and toss money about him like chicken-feed. "Count it, boys!" he would shout. "Count it all!" He earned ten to twenty dollars a day

selling a perfumed water which he bottled himself. And the women of the burlesques preferred it, because it was his, to Schiaparelli's finest.

He took an odd pleasure, too, in passing up men on crutches, or men with a limp. "Watch me pass up that pegleg gimp," he would boast, and off he would scoot past the other cripple, almost brushing him off the walk. Then he'd stop the platform as abruptly as though it had brakes, wheel about and wait challengingly, to see what, if anything, the gimp cared to do about it.

"I can do anythin' an able-bodied man can do," he warned all able-bodied men. "I'll outdrink 'n' outfight any man of you. You name it 'n' I'll do it better." His single fear seemed to be that others might regard him as handicapped. He was so devoted to proving his powers that every dawn was an open challenge to prove himself anew, to himself and to all men, in all things, before night. Smoking the first bitter cigarette of the dawn he would resolve fiercely, in the breaking day, to yield to no man and to give no quarter, as none had been given him.

IV

"Don't you go getting into no trouble over that girl," his housekeeper warned Shorty on the evening of that sultry August day, fumbling with her keys. "That boy got a big mouth but he don't mean nobody harm."

"What boy? What girl?"

"Don't pertend you ain't heard a word when the whole hotel is talkin'."

Shorty wheeled himself toward her and she backed involuntarily toward the door. Her hand was on the knob when he caught her wrist and twisted the keys out of her hand into his lap.

"You don't have to get rough. Gimme my keys. Venus told him she pays you off to stud her, that's what she told me." She slammed the door behind her.

Venus was resting. She was due to put on her strip act in fifteen minutes downstairs, and was lying alone in the dark when she heard him scratching like a cat at the door. He wheeled in before she had time to rise; she yanked on the little bulb above her bed. Shielding her eyes from the light, she feigned anger at his rudeness; at heart she was always happy to see him. He wheeled to the bed's edge until his great shaggy head rested on her pillow and she lay back to look directly into his eyes. They were lion's eyes, lit by yellow flares.

"How long I been takin' money off you?" he asked.

She saw he was serious and shook her head dubiously; as though wishing, somehow, that he really had. She sat up.

"First you come bargain' in here like a damned tank 'n' then you insult me." She glanced nervously at the door left ajar behind him, as though sensing trouble coming through it soon.

He was unfastening the straps to

his platform. He wasn't one for half-measures. Fear came up in her throat in a long dry burning there.

"You got somethin' awful wrong, Honey-Hush," she told him, "It was that Fancy said that to *me*." She sniffled, dabbing at her eyes. "I told him he better not let you hear him sayin' anything like that."

He studied her a long moment. Then wheeled, slowly and mechanically, across the uncarpeted floor and down the long and dim-lit corridor, leaving the door swinging a little behind him.

Sitting on the edge of the bed she heard the platform clumping down the stairwell and glanced at her watch: she'd have just time to get downstairs for her act.

That night the mild-mannered youth dreamed of the legless man. Lying on his rented bed he heard a slow and heavy clumping, down some endless gas-lit stairwell. The legless man was coming. The light was on and Fancy was sitting upright, paralyzed with an unnamed terror, watching the doorknob turning slowly, hoping uselessly that it would be too high for Shorty to turn all the way. He still had time to lock it; the key was still in the lock. Moving like a man wading in a slow-motion sea, stiff with dread, *it was almost too late, almost too late* and saw, as the door opened slowly, slowly, that there was no one there. No one down a long and fog-lit hall. No one — he knew for sure — in the whole vast hotel. In an access of

terror, his fingers, weak as water, fumbled at the key. And he wakened at last with the light still burning and the key still in the lock, glinting a little from the light's reflection.

He rose shakily and glanced at his watch. It was hours before his usual time to rise. And so he sat on the edge of his rented bed and asked himself what harm, after all, a halfy on a box could do to an able-bodied grammar-school graduate like himself. He sat on the disheveled bed, watching the neon lights of State Street blazing on and off, red and green, red and green; blowing brave smoke rings from cheap cigarettes; till the signs were darkened and the dawn came on and traffic picked up at last.

V

Fancy was just untying his apron at noon, preparing to run across the street for coffee, when Shorty coasted in. He wheeled himself, on his ball-bearing platform, like a shattered statue. A man of overweening vanity, he enjoyed nothing so much as posturing on his stage, turning this way and that, if there were women near, to exhibit his classic features, his overdeveloped biceps, his torso as lean as a lifeguard's; and his neat little pointed brown beard. As he coasted past the bar he pointed mockingly at Fancy and called out, "Where'd you get them ears, Four-Eyes? Boys! Pipe the ears on Four-Eyes!"

No one had ever noticed Fancy's

ears before; there was nothing particular about them to notice. Fancy leaned bleakly over the bar, trying to smile. It was a fine time to go for coffee.

"Your own ears ain't so little, Shorty," he replied, showing he knew a joke when he heard one.

Shorty wheeled back.

"You say something about my ears, fellow?"

Fancy fumbled with the apron; it had become knotted and his fingers were as numb as they'd been in his dream. The metal echo of the juke rang faintly once and died forever.

"What's the matter with my ears, Four-Eyes?"

Half a dozen derelicts gathered in a restless semicircle behind Shorty, fearing that the incident might end in a handshake. One, with his cap shading his eyes, cupped his palms to Shorty's ear and whispered in a whisky bass.

"Fancy was just sayin' he'd go fer you, boots 'n' shoes, if you tried gettin' rough with him."

Another advised Shorty's other ear. "He ast Venus why she has anythin' to do with a stinkin' halfy."

"He said she paid you off."

"He said that's where you get your dough."

Railroad Shorty kept his great voice low. "Whyn't you come out on the floor 'n' talk it over, Four-Eyes?" he asked softly.

"We can talk it out over the bar, Shorty. I got nothin' against you."

"He's jealous," the shadow-capped

voice put in, "cause he can't take Venus off you. He makes up dirty stories about you 'n' her. He draws dirty pitchers of her 'n' you too."

Railroad spoke with finality. "Come out of there 'r I'll come 'n' get you."

Fancy waited for Brother B. to tell Shorty to blow. Instead he heard Brother B. locking the doors.

Fancy waited till he heard the shutters being pulled. Then he laid his glasses carefully on the cash register and noticed, oddly, that the register said CASH PURCHASE.

The jackrollers and derelicts moved back against the wall, urging each other like men with the public welfare uppermost in mind.

"Give the men room now, fellas."

"Get them tables back, Zingo, so's nobody gets hurt."

"Let them have it out, fellas, that's what they want."

"No interferin', a square shake for everybody."

"Make 'em shake hands first, so's there won't be no hard feelin's."

"No, after they're through is better, then it's just a misanderstandin' sort of. They're *both* good fellas."

"Then let's see which is the best," Brother B. put in impatiently.

Railroad wheeled to the end of the bar to meet Fancy head on. Fancy leaned over with an iron spittoon in his hand.

"Back off 'r I'll bean you," he warned, making his voice almost tough. He waved the spittoon. Shorty

backed up the platform a foot or two.

"Farther. Back to the door."

Shorty wheeled backward reluctantly, his hands holding the little wheels in order to reverse them in a split moment; he rolled back an inch at a time, until the back of his head touched the knob of the washroom door. Fancy came out from behind the bar with the spittoon in his hand. Shorty wheeled forward slowly, one arm protecting his head. When the platform was almost upon him, and Shorty's arms were reaching, Fancy slammed the spittoon, like a discus, into Shorty's chest and rocked him like a stump in a storm; but his platform came on without wavering, his great arms reaching.

Fancy's fleeing heel slipped off of Shorty's hands but sent the boy stumbling; he recovered himself and came up, in the same motion, with a long swinging kick that caught the halfy squarely between the eyes. Shorty banged blindly into the bar, bounded back, caught his wheels and covered his head with both hands. Fancy clambered onto the nearest table and squatted there miserably, trembling in the limbs like a puppy and hoping, listening for the sound of the shutters being raised. But he heard only the steady, relentless whir of the fans overhead; and saw Shorty wiping the blood out of his eyes. He held his bandanna down to the cripple.

"Better brain him while he's blind,"

Fancy heard a low voice advising him, and he realized he must.

For they all knew that he didn't have it in him to do what he had to do. They knew to a man that he couldn't.

Shorty cleared his eyes deliberately. He too knew, folding the bandanna neatly, and returning it back up to the boy.

"Thank you," Shorty said.

And hurled the table over with a single twist of his fingers, sending Fancy sprawling comic-strip fashion, all arms and legs. Shorty held him then, face down to the floor, steadying the floundering youth; then twisted once, like winding a coiled spring, and spun him halfway across the room, head over heels and skidding. Shorty scooted swiftly beside him, dragged him back to the middle of the floor by the collar, and the crowd closed in.

This was it.

Pale with pleasure, the faces in the half light looked dimmed and bloated and blurred, like faces seen under water. Somewhere toward the back a woman giggled like a nervous girl. Then Shorty got Fancy's head beneath his shoulder, and the room seemed to smoke with blood.

Shorty rolled the boy over on his side, straddled one arm by riding over it with the platform, and lifted the arm that lay protectively over the boy's eyes. He lifted it carefully and laid it aside, and the boy lay deathly still, as though hoping that by complete defenselessness he might, at the final moment, gain mercy.

"He looks done in, Shorty."

Shorty, arm upraised like a club, looked down at the small white face, so helpless now that it looked more like a child's than a man's.

"He's cold, Shorty."

And it was true: they crowded in to see. The boy was cold; the eyes, bright and unseeing with shock, were dilated. And the arm came down, with a soft and soggy sound.

It rose in a full swing, back to the floor, till the knuckles touched the platform's edge; and swung forward and down, like a stone crusher, in a full and crushing arc.

"Oof."

Someone was getting sick.

When he raised it again the men watched for it to falter; they drew back a little, as from a mechanical device; and it did not falter. With each fresh blow each man felt redeemed for the blow his own life had been to him; till the face on the floor was a scarlet sponge and Shorty's teeth were chattering as with a chill.

With each animal groan from the floor each man breathed more freely.

"I like t'get up close t'accidents," the woman's voice remarked. They turned, and it was Venus, her lips full and red with pleasure and her eyes alight. Kneeling, she put her arms about Shorty and kissed him full on the mouth.

Shorty looked around like a man in a lifting daze, saw the girl and the men and the bar and Brother B., and the drawn shades. Then he looked down. He flung the girl from him with a low moan of disgust.

VI

The face on the floor was no longer a face. It was a paste of cartilage and blood through which a single sinister eye peered blindly. The broken mouth blew minute bubbles of froth and blood.

"He had it comin'," Venus assured her man, "you done just right." His head turned slowly toward her; and as it turned she drew back, twisting her fingers before her and looking, of a sudden, like a debauched old woman. Shorty tightened the straps of his platform, speaking in a confidential whisper to the face on the floor.

"Yer carpet-rags from now on, son," he said, "carpet-rags before yer time, like me 'n' all the people."

His voice was so melancholy that only its depth made it familiar. He heard Brother B. raising the blinds, and stroked his little pointed beard reflectively, blinking at the late sun that blinked back at him from the rising shutters. Then he wheeled

swiftly down the long aisle between the tables and the bar and out into the pavement-colored light.

He wheeled fast and noiselessly down the long, unlovely street, the little beard pointing in the heat. The derelicts watched him go and wondered what he had meant.

"Like Jesus Christ ridin' his cross 'stead of carryin' it," someone observed, as though resenting such a variation.

"He looks more like the devil t'me," Venus Darling said bitterly.

"He'll look more like twenty to life if he don't keep on wheelin'," Brother B. added threateningly.

Brother B. carried Fancy to the rear of Greek Steve's Bar, and returned to sprinkle sawdust along the floor. Then he bought a drink for everyone in the place, but did not drink with one of them; and when they had drunk he sent all of them out onto the street. He locked the door, poured himself a shot, turned on the juke, and sat alone beside it.

A TRIOLET FOR CHRISTMAS

BY ULRICH TROUBETZKOY

COME wish upon the Christmas Star
Which leads the heart to Bethlehem
After its journey from afar.
Come wish upon the Christmas Star
Of Gaspar Melchior, Baltazar,
And all the world which followed them.
Come wish upon the Christmas Star
Which leads the heart to Bethlehem.

GOING TO SCHOOL WITH THE MOVIES

BY HUBERT A. KENNY

SEEING a moving picture is seldom a matter of life and death, but such was the case in a remote British colony not long ago. There a man's life depended on a film flown to his local doctor: the patient, too sick to be moved, was located far from a surgeon experienced in the delicate and unusual operation which alone could save him; the film, demonstrating the way to perform the operation, arrived in time, and in one day the general practitioner learned the principles of an operative technique that a world-famous specialist had taken a lifetime to perfect.

It has become a commonplace that the film is one of the most powerful means of education ever devised. In movie houses throughout the country the commercial product is continually influencing our styles, manners, and way of living. Every GI, every flier took training lessons by film. The Army and Navy estimate that films saved 40 per cent in time required for training.

Yet less than one-fifth of our public schools have so much as a single sound-

picture projector. Why? America, which prides itself on its modern, scientific and mechanical apparatus and its high educational standards, has grossly neglected one of the most important single instruments of instruction. Now, if ever, we have the right to ask, to demand: why?

It isn't that the moving picture is so new, or that its educational value has been overlooked. Edison first showed his invention in public in 1894, and in 1924 he declared: "It may seem curious, but the money end of the movies never hit me the hardest. The feature that did appeal to me about the whole thing was the educational possibilities I thought I could see."

Edison's conjecture was soon substantiated by thorough, scientific studies that reduced the answer to hard, statistical fact: the teaching film offers a way to remember 40 per cent more in the same study time without extra effort! One study that established this fact was published thirteen years ago. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

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launched the investigation by asking, "What can the sound film contribute to education?" It was Dr. Philip J. Rulon of Harvard who got the answer — confirmed time and again by subsequent studies.

Ninth-grade students in general science were Rulon's guinea pigs. They were divided in true laboratory style into a control group studying in the usual way, and an experimental group taking time out from their regular study to look at movies specially produced for the course. Each group used the same text. Each spent the same number of hours.

The examination papers told the story: at the end of the course, the film group had learned 20.5 per cent more than the regular group; and in surprise examinations three months later, the film group remembered nearly 40 per cent more — 38.4 per cent more, to be exact.

Furthermore, the film group not only remembered a lot of facts; it also demonstrated a more highly developed ability to reason. At the end of the course, these students showed up 24.1 per cent better than the regular group on questions answerable only by reasoning. In the surprise examinations three months later, the marks of the experimental group averaged 43.1 per cent higher than those of the other on similar questions. Countless tirades have scored American education for cramming youngsters with facts without making them think. Yet here is a means of making them think, and they love it.

They love it, yet more than four-fifths of our schools lack the projectors necessary to supplement verbal with visual education.

II

Fourteen-year-old Mary Smith of Chicago is typical of the bright children for whom ordinary classroom work is just a bore. She refused to study, and spent hours poring over the "comic" books until she saw two films — one on leaves and their functions, and the other on seeds and how they are distributed. In the six months that followed, Mary read nine complete books on botany and related subjects, and is something of an authority on her favorite subject.

The results of many studies demonstrate over and over again that, contrary to the fears expressed in the early days of the educational film, students read more rather than less as the result of a greatly heightened interest in subjects presented by film.

The reasons for this increase in interest are not difficult to understand. In many respects the difference between the movies and conventional lessons is like the difference between describing a spiral with motions of the hand and defining it in such cumbersome words as "a plane curve traced by a point moving around a fixed point from which it continually recedes." The motion picture, like the moving hand describing the spiral, is a simple, direct means of communicating information. It cuts directly

through the red tape of verbosity. It conveys experiences which derive their meaning from motion. It shows change, processes, development. With animated drawings and diagrams, it can explain some things more directly than words can ever do.

The effectiveness of such direct explanation is dramatically illustrated by the University of Chicago's experience in teaching the molecular theory. Before the advent of the didactic film, students used to wade through a barrage of books, diagrams and lectures on this subject. With the film now in use, the same subject is taught in approximately two and a half hours.

Instruction in surgery, obstetrics, electrochemistry, thermodynamics and many other advanced subjects is being supplemented by the use of the film, partly because, as Professor Hogben of the University of London has pointed out, "the film can explain many things which many people can never understand at all, if they have to rely on the written word."

Today much of the teaching of surgery is being done by film. Although this is partly due to the direct explanation which it provides, other reasons are perhaps even more important. First, every medical student in a group can see the filmed operation from a vantage point as good and sometimes better than that of the surgeon himself — a physical impossibility when five, ten or more students are watching an actual operation from the surgical amphitheatre. Secondly, the film can be selected to demon-

strate the typical case in the kind of operation being studied. Or, at the discretion of the instructor, the film may be selected to show an operation with the greatest possible variety of complications — the kind of case that might actually occur only once in a hundred or even in a thousand times.

The film may be repeated time and again, stopped in the middle for discussion or explanation, pointed up with diagrams or animated drawings, slowed down for clearer observation, or planned to omit routine surgical practices that are already familiar to every student. Obviously none of these techniques is possible in the operating room itself.

The unique immediacy of instruction by film is an asset to education on every level from the first grade up. In the grade school the film gives the youngster experience instead of a mere mumbo-jumbo of words. Then, with that experience in mind — the shapes and sounds and motions of things — he is interested and usually eager to learn the names by which to call them. Reading, in turn, becomes far more interesting, for as he adds to his vocabulary, words call up real, visual images of things he has heard and seen. Words cease to be hollow sounds. They are part of his own personal world.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the film classroom itself. Take a class, for example, studying glaciers.

Most adults have an idea that a glacier looks much like a great mountain of ice. They know that it moves

slowly, and that its tremendous weight represents enormous power.

But in southern California or Florida, a child's most magnificent conception of ice may be the little cube out of his mother's refrigerator. To ask that child to understand, by means of words and diagrams alone, the power of ice to grind out the huge Great Lakes is a large order indeed. How much greater the meaning, how much clearer are the words and diagrams of the text after young Tommy has seen a ten-minute motion picture of a glacier. How much clearer after he has watched a time-lapse picture showing the short distance a glacier moves in a year, and an animated drawing of the glaciers moving over the region where the Great Lakes were to be formed, pushing and grinding through thousands of years, and finally receding to leave behind them the largest inland lakes in the world.

How much more curious is Tommy's approach to the text; how much more interested his pursuit of details, once he has a fair concept of the process as a whole. No wonder he can remember 38.4 per cent more about a subject than the child who hasn't seen the film!

III

Enjoyable as such a film is, however, it is not mere entertainment. Neither is it a propaganda film designed to sell Tommy more ice or ice cream. It is serious work, and for best results re-

quires the able direction of intelligent teachers.

The child's approach to the showing of a film should be fraught with curiosity which only the teacher's introduction can assure. She can focus his interest on specific points; she can remind him of his own experiences and point up the similarities or differences stressed by the film. If it concerns glaciers, she can comment specifically on the ice cube he knows, and relate it directly to the mountain of ice he shall see. Curious, then, the child sees the film with an active interest, probing for facts.

Class discussion immediately after the film brings out points that every child has grasped, and other points that few, if any, have noticed. Here it is up to the teacher to whet curiosity once again. For immediately after the discussion period, the film may be shown anew.

On succeeding days, alternating between discussions, oral and written examinations, the child may see the same film as much as four or five times, depending on the complexity of the subject. With each showing the child picks up more details and reinforces his total impression.

It is in the discussion periods, guided by the teacher, that the child's use of words improves. For example, a ten minute film, *The Frog*, illustrating the development from the egg to the full grown contender for the jumping championship of Calaveras County, was being shown to second and third graders. During the

discussion period after the first showing, one of the stalwarts of the second grade, referring to the tadpoles, announced, "I seen the pollifrogs." But before he was through with the discussion periods and several showings of the film, this youngster knew that a tadpole and a polliwog are two words for the same thing. Even more important, he knew what a tadpole looks like, how it moves, where it lives, how it eats, and that it will eventually become a frog. The tadpole and the frog became vital parts of that child's world, and their names took on genuine meaning.

Teachers may be assured that no matter how dull or how bright their charges may be, the film is still effective. A study by Dr. V. C. Arnsperger, published by Columbia University Press, leaves no doubt about this. Dr. Arnsperger found that in film teaching, pupils of lower than average intelligence benefit in proportion to their capacity as much as or more than those of higher than average intelligence.

So far most of the films that have been produced for primary and secondary schools are in the fields of science and the social studies. But many of their titles arouse curiosity all by themselves: *Flowers at Work*, *Leaves*, *Seed Dispersal*, *Mechanisms of Breathing*, *Mountain Building*, *The Wearing Away of the Land*. Titles in the social studies include *Children in Holland*, *French-Canadian Children*, *Children of China* and many others. By portraying the similarities between

foreign people and our own and evoking a wholehearted respect for their differences, the films about children of other lands make a significant contribution to international understanding.

The entertainment moguls in Hollywood have cooperated with educational groups by permitting classroom use of their own productions, most of which are used as supplementary material in history. Parts or the whole of such motion pictures as *The Story of Louis Pasteur* and *Drums Along the Mohawk* have been adapted for this purpose.

Juvenile Delinquency, a "March of Time" film, brought surprising results when it was shown to a high school class in Wilmington. Impressed by the film, the students interviewed representatives of thirty-two community agencies concerned with the problem, studied the relation of juvenile delinquency to housing, economic status, recreation facilities and health. Finally the city fathers were stirred to action. Such tangible results dramatically demonstrate the power of the film in the hands of an intelligent teacher.

IV

Eric Johnston, President of the Motion Picture Association of America, recently announced the appropriation of \$100,000 for the production of seven sample experimental films for classroom use. A few days earlier, Mr. Johnston said that members of the

Association had contributed \$125,000 to the American Council on Education in 1943. Yet these contributions appear to be little more than gestures, for thus far none of the seventy-five film projects which the Council has approved for their educational value has been produced.

It appears that if classroom films are to be made, the job will devolve upon others. The oldest in the field is Encyclopaedia Britannica Films (formerly Erpi), now owned by the University of Chicago; one of the newest, established in 1945, is Young America Films.

Even these ardent celluloid enthusiasts warn educators and parents of the training film's limitations, however. It should not be used to replace physical equipment that is already available, they say. A motion picture of a Bunsen burner, for example, is far more expensive and considerably less effective than the real thing. To reverse the old comment on hot arguments, the movie of a Bunsen burner sheds light but no heat.

Neither should the motion picture be thought of as the end-all and be-all of education, either now or in the future. It is difficult to conceive of an effective film for the teaching of all aspects of philosophy. And in the final analysis, the teacher is and always will be the most important part of any education. The classroom film is only a tool, even though it is the most effective tool developed since the invention of printing.

While paying lip service to this

new medium, educators throughout the country continue to plod wearily along on the same old treadmill of conventional teaching. The state of New York spends about \$185 per year for each elementary and secondary pupil — more than any other state — but it lags far behind in the use of films. New York City spent a total of less than six cents per pupil in 1945 on all kinds of visual instruction aids, including pictures, photoprints, lantern slides, stereographs, maps, charts, globes, models, graphs and motion pictures.

There are a dozen excuses for our failure to adopt the film more widely, but practically none that public demand can't answer. A few psychologists maintain that the eyes of the youngster from kindergarten age up to the second grade are not sufficiently developed to follow the films. This is hotly denied by those who have tested this theory experimentally. One such test was made with a very brief film entitled *The Kitten*. It was shown separately to groups of two-, three-, four- and five-year-olds. The two-year-olds stretched out their hands to pet the kitten on the screen; the three-year-olds shouted "kitty"; the four-year-olds commented, "The kitty's jumping"; and the five-year-olds screamed for more pictures after the reel had ended. Their eyes seemed to be all right — and so was their enthusiasm.

Other reasons for not using films are the educators' failure or refusal to recognize their value ("What was good

enough for us is good enough for our children"); the insistence that other items in the school budget have priority over the film, regardless of merit; and downright refusal of educators to learn how to use the film properly.

On the other hand, teachers' colleges and universities have added training courses in the use of the film, and more economical means of distribution are being worked out by the producers of educational films. These are the hopeful signs for the tool of

education that promises 40 per cent better memory and 43 per cent better reasoning than traditional schooling.

No people have ever poured money into education as have the Americans. But the fact remains that today less than 20 per cent of our public schools have even the facilities to begin teaching by means of the most efficient method ever discovered — proved thirteen years ago beyond all doubt. It is high time for parents and teachers to begin asking their school boards for an explanation.



IN PRAISE OF MAN

BY SAMUEL YELLEN

LAY out the parts and weigh them in your hand:
Rods and cones, retina, gelatin lens —
The eye! Out of what scanty evidence
Of light-waves it contrives a wonderland.

Put these together with a certain skill:
Three little bones, a bit of tautened skin.
You have the ear, which makes a bulletin
Out of each sound, to warn, to lure, to thrill.

Yet not content with these marvels, man's heart
Weaves fantastic threads from its tangled skein
Of fear and hope into a tapestry
Cunning and rare. And man's sedulous brain
Mixes reverie and thought with deft art
To yield its self-deluding sorcery.

ART OF THE HEADLINE WRITER

BY CHET VONIER

A COPYREADER I know on a West Coast newspaper is accustomed, in moments of petulance, to fling his pencil on his desk and announce to all present, "This is a hell of a silly way to make a living!"

The man has a good deal of reason on his side. In the newspaper industry, his craft is one of the least appreciated and the most beset by mechanical limitations and editorial whimsy. The visible fruits of his labor are the headlines — he writes them. Laymen who dismiss newspapers with the bromide, "I just glance at the headlines," pay an unconscious tribute to the copyreader — and the only one he is likely to get.

The tradition persists, even among newspapermen, that a copyreader is a former reporter who has fled from bunions and varicose veins to the edge of the horseshoe desk. This is rarely the case. The good copyreader is captured young. The job is much too exacting and specialized to allow of any other method of recruitment. It requires more of a special sort of mental agility and resilience than an elderly brain can encompass.

Newspaper headlines have evolved from airy ambiguities like "SHOCKING INTELLIGENCE!" (still affected by some British newspapers) to sharp, specific summations: "BUZZ BOMBS BLITZ LONDON." They epitomize the content of the article, serving as brief, dramatic prologues to the reporter's account. Because of the space limitations imposed on him, the copyreader has become a practicing semanticist. He is quick to seize upon anything pithy or pungent and is often instrumental in bringing new terms into the language. "A-Bomb," begotten of a copyreader's need for concise expression, is now part of our speech. And so too, despite the purists, are such war terms as "panzer" and "blitz," to which the copyreader has applied new meanings.

The word "probe" is now one of the clichés of newspaper headlining. Purists maintain a plaintive insistence that it has to do only with a surgical matter, *i.e.*, the probing of a wound. But an ingenious copyreader once requisitioned it as a synonym for any searching inquiry, and that it has come to mean.

CHET VONIER began as a reporter in Milwaukee and since then has worked on copy desks on newspapers in Seattle, San Francisco and New York.

II

The newspaper copyreader works within the narrowest of all literary limits. The style and size of type as well as the number of lines in the headline are determined by another editor before it reaches the copy desk. Each line of the headline will accommodate a limited number of characters — an average count for top-of-the-column headlines on most newspapers is eleven or twelve letters and spaces. Except on the most rural journals no word may be divided between one line and the next. As the papers progress in size, other restrictions are imposed. On most newspapers, it is regarded as sinful to end the first line of a headline with a preposition. On others, a copyreader may not begin a headline with a verb, leaving the subject understood. On still other papers, an adjective or adverb has to be on the same line as the word it modifies.

A great many newspapers have words that may not be used in heads, sometimes because they are overworked, sometimes because one editor or another simply doesn't like them. The aforementioned "probe" has been proscribed on many newspapers. One West Coast editor banished the word "blood." When a copyreader asked innocently what to do about "bloodhound," several editors went into a huddle and decided on "dog."

Within such narrow limits, the headline writer contrives to write captions which are informative, intel-

ligent, and occasionally droll. His vocabulary is highly selective and, if he is one of the experts of the trade, it is extensive too. He may borrow "nab" from thieves' argot and "nuclear fission" from the physicists; he will pirate "knockout" from the sports page and "grand slam" from the bridge table.

He has a high regard for words, but is not seriously hampered by a belief in their inviolability. "Poliomyelitis" is an unwieldy word for common speech as well as for headlines. Copyreaders solved the problem by whacking off four syllables and presenting an understandable and pronounceable "polio" to their readers. Here again the purist will object that "polio" is not a word — but it is in general usage, it expresses a specific meaning, and the ordinary user will cheerfully forgive its illegitimacy.

The name "Roosevelt" has nine letters — a situation intolerable to two generations of copyreaders. Headline writers were the parties responsible for dubbing the two Presidents TR and FDR. And the New Deal, whatever benefit or distress it may have brought him as an individual, was a cheery Santa Claus with a bagful of alphabetical bureaus for the copyreader. He had made some tentative and halting experiments with such Russians agencies as GPU, but beginning with NRA all the abbreviations were accepted by the copy desk with joyful whoops, and quickly incorporated into the vernacular. NLRB and WSB and OPA have become en-

tities to thousands who couldn't, for their lives, translate them into National Labor Relations Board, Wage Stabilization Board or Office of Price Administration. A reference to the Works Progress Administration will raise few memories; WPA recalls instantly and vividly a whole era.

More than any other agency, the headline writer is responsible for bringing these alphabetical terms into general usage, but it took the uninhibited editor of an Army newspaper to realize their full possibilities. Summarizing the escapades and arrest of a wayward servicewoman, he wrote:

AWOL WAC SOL

The copyreader is always confronted by the sad fact that a term becomes hackneyed in direct proportion to its aptness. It is also true that the less gifted men of the craft will seize upon a felicitous usage and labor it shamefully. Yet the very repetition gives it authenticity.

III

Another of the copyreader's chores is editing the news. No metropolitan newspaper has the space to print all the news that comes to it. Most newspapers work on the theory that it is better to use a part of each important story than to print a few in entirety. The copyreader is therefore charged with reducing to its essentials the avalanche of material that comes to his desk. It is this feature of his job that brings him into violent collision with the reporters on his staff.

There are few days when some writer, bemused by the charm of his own deleted words, does not condemn the copy desk as a gathering of ghouls. It is true that an inept and unimaginative copyreader can do unwarranted violence to a well-written article, but it is also true that more reporters have been saved by copyreaders from appearing in print as colossal asses than have suffered mortal literary wounds.

Newspaper style is another of the copyreader's cares. This has nothing to do with literary style; it refers to particular rules for spelling, punctuation, capitalization, use of numerals, etc. Such usages, as well as the permissibility of certain expressions, vary from paper to paper. A too literal copyreader can perform wonders with style, like the man who had been cautioned never to use the word "scab" in reference to a non-striking worker. When a story about labor violence came to his desk, he had the lusty and indignant pickets driving off strikebreakers with angry cries of "Non-union men! Non-union men!"

Another was employed by a paper which preferred to name the day of the week rather than to use "today," "tomorrow" or "yesterday." He was given the account of the funeral of some notable which the paper covered to the extent of printing even the eulogy. The eulogist, having recalled the illustrious life of the deceased, came to his climax: "Today he lies before us —." The copyreader conscientiously struck out "today" and wrote in "On Thursday."

IV

Every copyreader is aware of the impish perversity of words and their capacity for taking on unexpected meanings in some contexts. A headline written with great care and sobriety often develops a ribald connotation that eludes its author. It is on the routine, virtually negligible stories that such nightmarish things most often occur. A small town Minnesota editor was handling an item on the allocation to Cook Township in his county of two pieces of apparatus for the artificial insemination of cattle. His paper became a collector's item because of the headline. It came out:

TWO INSEMINATORS

TO SERVICE COOK

Conscious humor, of course, is employed by some copyreaders with results that can only be described as mixed. To one genius came an item reporting a seduction suit instituted by a young woman who had pledged her honor against a fur coat on the outcome of a football game. With a nice regard for accuracy, the copyreader went to the files for details of the game, then wrote:

SHE LOSES HER

ALL, 6 TO 0

Reverence is no part of the equipment of a headline writer. He becomes familiar on short acquaintance and gaily greets notables in print by their first names. During the progress of the

highly-placed romance of Edward VIII and the American divorcée, Mrs. Wallis Simpson, formality went out the window and the copyreaders of America chummily referred to the bride as "Wallie." And the millions of stenographers and housewives who sympathized with the international romance warmed to "Wallie" as they might never have to "Mrs. Simpson." The headlines never quite got around to referring to His Majesty as "Eddie."

Suits for alimony — "heart balm" in the copyreader's lexicon — really permit the headline writer to take off the wraps. Insouciantly he moves into the bedroom with the unhappy couple and warms over their old endearments:

"I WANT MY 'APPLE PIE,'"

SAYS "CUDDLES'" LETTER

The headline writer delights in selecting the choicest idiocies and making them sound even more revolting than they did when they were being read before a bug-eyed jury.

The Browning affair made every day a circus day on the copy desk for a time, while the headlines stripped "Daddy" and "Peaches" down to their most intimate inanities. Marplot legislators in some states have outlawed breach of promise suits and so taken away opportunities for such mad barbecues, but an occasional lively divorce suit still finds the copyreader reaching out for the tabasco. And he will continue to do so as long as readers find it palatable.



REPORT ON PSYCHOSOMATIC MEDICINE

BY MILTON L. ZISOWITZ

MOST general practitioners admit that between a third and a half of the patients they see from day to day suffer more from emotional than physical pathology. Dr. Flanders Dunbar, of the Department of Medicine and Psychiatry at Columbia University, says that those with special training in psychosomatic medicine would raise the figure to at least 80 per cent.

Drs. Edward Weiss and O. Spurgeon English of the Temple University Medical School maintain that about a third of the patients who consult a physician do not have any bodily (somatic) disease to account for their illness. These are the so-called purely "functional" cases. Approximately another third, according to these authorities, have symptoms that are dependent partly upon emotional and partly upon organic conditions.

Brigadier General William C. Menninger, formerly chief psychiatrist of the United States Army, reports that a survey of Army hospitals, conducted by internists, showed that 25 to 50

per cent of cardiovascular cases, 10 to 30 per cent of gastrointestinal cases, and 5 to 15 per cent of orthopedic cases were functional. He believes that the figures would have been even higher had the survey been conducted with the aid of psychiatrists rather than by internists alone.

It is with this problem, the relationship between body and mind in causing illness, that psychosomatic medicine is concerned. It must be emphasized that the physicians who are interested in this field do not contend that either the mind or the body alone is the predominant cause of disease. Psychosomatic medicine merely recognizes that the patient must be considered as a human being rather than simply as a fortuitous collection of organs. In other words, the physician treats not only the ulcer, but the patient who has the ulcer, in order to effect a real cure.

It was in the nineteenth century that overemphasis on separation of mind and body in medical treatment was given backing by the work of Pasteur and Virchow. Pasteur proved

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the bacterial origin of many diseases, and Virchow demonstrated that a large number of bodily disorders are associated with structural changes in the cells. Under their influence medicine began to confine its search for the causes of human ailments to the body alone. And the influence of Pasteur, Virchow and their followers still largely determines the education and the thinking of those in the medical profession.

II

But there were men who refused to believe that the mind and the body were independent of each other, and who supported their skepticism with experimental evidence. One of these was an American Army surgeon named William Beaumont. On June 6, 1822, while he was stationed at Fort Mackinac in the Northern Michigan Territory, an 18-year-old trapper named Alexis St. Martin was wounded when a shotgun was accidentally discharged. The blast tore through the youth's side, and an opening was made directly into his stomach. Miraculously, St. Martin survived, and Beaumont began a series of experiments which were to last eight years. Through the "window" in his patient's abdominal wall, the doctor was able to observe the stomach in action — its reactions to various foods, its motions, its secretions, and the general influence of mental and emotional disturbances upon the internal processes of digestion.

More than a hundred years later, Dr. Harold Wolff of the Cornell University Medical School was able to enlarge upon Beaumont's experiments when a patient, who so burned his esophagus by drinking scalding-hot fluid that it became permanently sealed, had to have a surgical opening made in his stomach in order to eat. Tom, Dr. Wolff's patient, was forced to eat by tasting and chewing food and then expectorating it into an ordinary kitchen funnel inserted into the opening of his stomach. Dr. Wolff was thus able to demonstrate the relation of gastric juice secretions and emotional states (a phenomenon which the great Russian physiologist, Pavlov, has illustrated in his experiments with dogs). He also found that psychological disturbances caused other alterations in the physiology of the stomach.

When Tom became resentful, or hostile, or enraged, the lining of his stomach became gorged with blood — it blushed, just as his face did. When Tom was frightened or anxious, his stomach as well as his face became pale. By creating and curing ulcers in Tom's stomach at will, Dr. Wolff was able to prove experimentally the theory of the psychiatrist, Dr. Franz Alexander, that peptic ulcers can be caused by emotional difficulties, and can often be healed by removing the psychological bases of their origin.

While the work of men like Beaumont, Pavlov and Wolff was chiefly concerned with the effect of the mind on the gastrointestinal system, the

fifty years of research carried on by the late Professor Walter B. Cannon showed that other organs and organ systems were also vitally affected by psychological factors. Dr. Cannon and his co-workers at the Harvard Medical School showed how emotional disturbances can affect the body's heat-regulating mechanism, the blood stream, the muscles and the heart. He conceived of the major emotions as a kind of emergency mechanism preparing the body for combat or flight.

Under the influence of fear, rage or pain, the adrenal glands pour out their hormone into the blood stream. Operating through the sympathetic nervous system, this secretion accelerates the action of the heart, increases the rate of respiration, raises the level of blood pressure and blood sugar, and enlarges the capacity of the muscles for strenuous action. If the danger is imaginary, however, or such that no fight or flight takes place, these changes are likely to result in physiological disturbances which may become chronic and result in bodily disorders. In this way, for example, a teacher, constantly aware that he must be patient and kind, throttles his blood vessels instead of his recalcitrant pupils and thereby may develop circulatory disorders.

Even more important, perhaps, than the experiments upon specific organs and organ systems which Cannon carried out, was the concept he developed of *homeostasis* — the notion that there is a dynamic interrelation between the psyche and soma

and the external environment which must be taken into account if illness is to be treated effectively. This concept of homeostasis is the foundation of all current thinking and research in psychosomatic medicine — this, and the profound insight into the mind and emotions of man which was given to science by the investigations of Sigmund Freud.

III

The fact that "nervousness" affects the cardiovascular and gastrointestinal systems is so well known to physicians and many laymen that there is no need to labor the point. But recent investigations, especially those which Dr. Flanders Dunbar has been conducting for more than fifteen years at the Columbia Medical Center, show that the heart and stomach are not the only mirrors of man's emotions.

When she began her investigations in psychosomatic medicine, Dr. Dunbar decided to use the patients in fracture and accident wards as a control group. Her studies soon led her to suspect that other than purely "accidental" factors were involved in causing accidents. She and her associates found that neither environment nor chance determines the incidence of accidents to nearly so great a degree as is commonly supposed.

Industrial reports show not only that a small percentage of the employees suffer a large proportion of the accidents, but that those workers

who have the worst factory records also have the greatest number of mishaps away from their work. Reports by insurance companies, the National Research Council, and the British Industrial Health Research Board reveal that from 80 to 90 per cent of all accidents are due not to defective machinery, or physical or mental disability, or the worker's lack of skill, but to some unexplained personal disorder.

A large trucking company reported its accident rate reduced by 80 per cent after it had transferred the 5 per cent of its drivers with the poorest safety records to non-driving jobs. But it was found that the men who had been shifted began to have personal instead of traffic accidents. All this evidence convinced Dr. Dunbar that there was such a thing as an "accident habit," and that the chief factors in its causation were psychological.

Mrs. M. thought that she was just unlucky. Married to a prosperous business man, she spent most of her time in philanthropic work. But for years she had been plagued by accidents. Once she stubbed her foot on the bathtub and broke a toe. Another time she cut her finger while she was manicuring her nails and the wound became seriously infected. Getting out of a taxicab, she fell and fractured her ankle. There were numerous other mishaps, minor and serious. Finally, a doctor using the psychosomatic approach elicited from her the admission that her life as a clubwoman did not

satisfy her. What she really wanted was to stay at home, raise a family and be a comfortable housewife. When she and her husband adjusted their lives to meet her subconscious desires, she became really happy and her "bad luck" disappeared.

One of Dr. Dunbar's patients had had five miscarriages. Physical examinations and laboratory tests showed that there was nothing organically wrong with her. What the tests failed to reveal, however, was that subconsciously the woman did not want a child. As a writer, she felt that an infant would interfere with her work and compete for her husband's love. After psychiatric treatment she not only carried through a successful pregnancy, but also found that her writing improved and her married life was happier.

IV

Workers in psychosomatic medicine are accumulating evidence to show that many other ailments are largely psychological in nature — diabetes, respiratory disorders, skin ailments and arthritis. The tale of the man who was afflicted with "rose fever" and went off into paroxysms of sneezing when paper flowers were brought into his room is a classic among allergists. A migraine headache or a sudden cold frequently enables a patient to evade some especially onerous task. A long stay in a tuberculosis sanitarium is a convenient way to escape the problems of modern living.

In a paper published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Dr. A. E. Bennett, director of the Neuro-Psychiatric Research Foundation of the Bishop Clarkson Hospital in Omaha, says: "Mistakes in diagnosis and treatment of patients with . . . psychosomatic, or actual psychotic disorders are so common as gravely to discredit the acumen of the medical profession." Dr. Bennett supports his contention with a study of 150 typical cases treated in the psychiatric department of a general hospital. These 150 men and women had had a total of 496 medical treatments, 244 surgical treatments, and 71 treatments by cultists and others before coming under psychiatric care. Dr. Bennett states that while it is difficult to show that the surgical treatments were unnecessary, the removed organs being no longer available for examination, a large number of the medical treatments were completely uncalled for and useless.

He cites the case of a man who had been in bed for six weeks, unable to sleep without sedatives. He walked with a shuffling, stooped gait, and complained of burning throat, twitches, fearful headaches, severe constipation and pressure under the ribs. He feared heart disease. After a complete hospital examination, two internists could find nothing wrong with him and referred him to the psychiatric service. Previously, he had consulted eight doctors and had received the following diagnoses and treatments: toxic and acid condition

— laxatives and cathartics; gall bladder trouble — diet and pills; toxicity from a hyperacid condition and spastic colon — diet, diathermy and colonic irrigations; goiter — doses of iodine and proposed surgery. After thirty-eight days of psychiatric care, the patient was discharged, and a follow-up three years later found him perfectly healthy.

Aside from the suffering brought upon patients and their families, mistreatment of psychosomatic disorders places a tremendous financial burden on the community. "The question is not," says Dr. Dunbar, "whether we can afford psychiatric care — it is, rather, whether we can afford to do without it." The psychosomatic approach in medicine can save hospitals thousands of dollars annually.

In one state hospital a psychiatrist was allowed to treat an average of 146 out of some 3500 patients admitted annually. In so doing he reduced the hospitalization time of these patients by 44 per cent, saving the community \$8465 per year. Dr. Dunbar estimates that 80 per cent of all patients in general hospitals should receive psychiatric service. She tells of a boy, nine years old, who had cost his parents \$6000 and social agencies another \$4000 for what was supposedly heart disease. He was cured after ten visits to one of those medical centers which has learned the wisdom of maintaining a psychiatrist on its staff. Contrary to popular belief, psychosomatic treatment is very seldom either a lengthy or an expensive cure.

Why, then, has the medical profession been so reluctant to recognize the need for treating both psyche and soma? The organic tradition is so deeply entrenched, in both our medical schools and hospitals, that many doctors still sneer at psychiatry and its practitioners. Even the ten American medical schools which lay greatest emphasis on undergraduate psychiatric training devote an average of only 4 per cent of their time to the study of the human mind. But more psychiatric training in the medical schools will not, in itself, remedy the situation.

General Menninger, who was impressed by the conspicuous absence of Army physicians with adequate training in psychosomatic medicine, suggests that a general educational program be instituted among all

physicians. Dr. Dunbar points to the work of the society which publishes the *Journal of Psychosomatic Medicine* as an example of the way in which physicians in all specialties can pool their knowledge.

But doctors alone can do little without the aid of an enlightened public. The stigma which is still attached to mental and emotional ailments causes patients to look askance upon any physician who tells them that their personalities rather than their bodies are ailing. Patients would much rather have heart trouble or stomach ulcers than neuroses. They boast of their allergies but are ashamed to admit they have been treated by a psychiatrist. When mental illness is no longer considered disreputable we can be certain of receiving more intelligent medical treatment.

CHRISTMAS CAROL

BY FRANCES FROST

THE wise men now on camels
Come no more to seek
the young child in the manger,
the gentle and the meek.

The physicists in secret
devise a splendid plan
to desolate the planet
and to extinguish man.

No star of love burns steadfast
above the earth; but high,
mankind's brief eyes behold this night
the mushroom in the sky.

THE THEATRE

BY GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

Cyrano and the Duchess

TO AN age which pridefully, for all the rebuffs it suffers, imagines that it is sternly realistic, *Cyrano de Bergerac* must seem like the libretto of a romantic operetta of the long ago, a superior libretto to be sure, but a libretto none the less, and one somewhat wrinkled. First produced in France in 1897, its plumed romance and extravagant improbabilities have to such an age the ring of a rusty bell, sometimes still faintly silvery yet on the whole no little flat and deadened. But to those whose tastes are not arbitrarily conditioned by changing times, its fairy tale for adults still in its poetic raptures and humors provides a holiday from the enveloping drabness and in its fantastic strumming of the E-string still a foolish and welcome vacation from a prosy world.

Though a contrived piece of dramatic writing — it now and again suggests a Scribe alcoholized to the point of song — and though its ambitious romantic expression sometimes suggests an optimistic stage door Johnny waiting bouquet in hand at the back entrance to the Louvre, some of its scenes are among the stage's most pleasantly remembered. And, while essentially it may be little more than a de luxe juke-box and

while its heroic bravado may impress the more resistantly realistic as the crowing of a mechanical rooster, there remains in its organism, as I observed some time ago, all the handsome bravery of all those creatures amongst us on earth from whom a careless Providence withheld at birth the prettier gifts it bestowed on luckier men.

That the play has hardly profited from most of its various English translations and adaptations is generally allowed. Of the five with which I am acquainted — Kingsbury's, Hall's, Norman's, Whitehall's, and the presently re-employed Hooker's — only the last named is in the aggregate satisfactory, and even it has several shortcomings. In the others, there is often too slavish a literality, too awkward a sense of word values, and too little awareness of the dramatic modifications of the two different stages. Hooker's adaptation, for all its other virtues, is similarly weakened at several points by a lack of true feel for dramatic effect.

I give just one illustrative example. Whatever critical view one may hold of the play, few can deny that its final curtain is one of the most impressive in romantic dramatic litera-

ture. I recall it to you, however, as we get it in Hooker's version.

Thus, the dying Cyrano:

Yes, all my laurels you have riven away
And all my roses; yet in spite of you
There is one crown I bear away with me,
And tonight, when I enter before God,
My salute shall sweep all the stars away
From the blue threshold! One thing
without stain,
Unspotted from the world, in spite of
doom

Mine own!

(He springs forward, his sword aloft)

And that is. . . .

(The sword escapes from his hand; he totters, and falls into the arms of Le Bret and Ragueneau)

ROXANE: *(bending over him and kissing him on the forehead)* — That is. . . .

CYRANO: My white plumel

It is obvious that the adjective "white" (in Kingsbury's version it is "unsullied," in Whitehall's "undishonored") is redundant and enfeebles the ring of the tag line for the English-speaking stage. Hall and Norman, though their adaptations, as noted, are otherwise deficient, wisely deleted it. Though, furthermore, the Hall version is in the main one of the poorest, at least one phrasing here is better than Hooker's. In place of the latter's "And tonight, when I enter before God, my salute shall sweep all the stars away from the blue threshold; one thing without stain, unspotted from the world, in spite of doom mine own" — we have "And tonight, when I enter God's house, in saluting broadly will I sweep the azure threshold with what despite of

all I carry forth unblemished and unbent. . . ."

What, in short, is needed is a translation-adaptation rid of the otherwise sketchy greasepaints in Hall no less than in Kingsbury, the strain for exactness in Norman, the unmusical rhythms and grim precision in Whitehall, and such theatrical-dramatic lapses in Hooker.

The play, as is sufficiently known, was written by Rostand expressly for the great magnavox competences of Coquelin. Save an actor have such a vocal equipment, the Cyrano rôle loses its vital flamboyance and romantic brio and the lines are likely to take on the color of a movie Romeo handicapped by a defective sound track. Coquelin, gifted with the necessary voice, was everything that Rostand wished for. "It was to the soul of Cyrano that I intended to dedicate this poem," he wrote, somewhat sententiously, "but since that soul has been reborn in you, Coquelin, it is to you that I dedicate it." Substitute voice for soul and, less fancily and a whole lot more honestly, you would have what Rostand doubtless really meant — or should have.

Richard Mansfield, who played the rôle first in this country — the simultaneously produced Augustin Daly abortion of the play with Charles Richman not counting — had the required acting ability in other directions but a voice that, while sufficient in certain of its aspects, lacked the necessary tone and sweep and at

times had the harmonic effect of suddenly encountering a dead black ivory on the rôle's keyboard. Walter Hampden enjoyed the voice, at least in much greater degree, and, though sometimes scarcely the actor for the rôle in other particulars, brought to it what first and foremost it demands. José Ferrer, the current interpreter, though he reads clearly and intelligently, simply has not the vocal range and resonance. His is a good voice such as it is, but here without the demanded variety of heroic phrasing and, if you will, romantic ham vibrance which the part prays for. He begins well enough, but monotony of delivery gradually converts his performance from the theatrical heroic into the recitational.

II

Though John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* has been staged by several amateur organizations, the local professional theatre has had to wait until recently for the first production of the early seventeenth century's prime necrological tragedy. Its score of nine killed is a record of sorts, since beaten, so far as I can recall, only in more modern years by the blood and thunder Wild West melodramas, which were held not to give their customers their money's worth unless biting the dust were at least thirty or forty Indians, impersonated by half a dozen supers who unobserved crawled off the stage and reappeared for a second, third and fourth decease.

Slaughter on the still grand, if somewhat lesser, scale, however, was close to Webster's fancy, as all period pundits know, and in his directly antecedent *The White Devil*, which bears a surface resemblance to *The Duchess* and is the better play, he got himself into this real sporting form with an experimental six murders. From the horror and terror of such carnage it was his intent to evoke pity—and evoke it he apparently did in his time—but it is to be feared that what is evoked in these days is less commiseration than rude laughter.

The reason is plain. Like *Hamlet* without Hamlet, *The Duchess of Malfi*, as *The White Devil* for all its relative virtues before it, is like Bacon without Shakespeare. The power to lift his materials above sheer melodrama was simply not in Webster; aside from a few winging passages the writing is often merely turgid where it aspires to be rich crimson and purple, and the dramaturgy sketchy where it hopes to be elliptically driving. That Lamb and Swinburne felt he touched the sublime surely implies a very peculiar sense of sublimity on the part of those worthies.

The gory tale of the ill-starred Giovanna, derived, we are told, from the history of the granddaughter of King Ferdinand of Naples who in the early fourteenth century fled from the vengeance of her brothers with the steward of her household whom she had secretly married, is wrought by Webster with an intensity which

is confined to his actors and which is not imparted to his auditors. Where flight of true poetic expression might bear it across the footlights, the carrier is frequently crippled blank verse, and where dramatic sensitiveness and imagination might assist, there is but a lame rhythmical prose.

As an historical curio, the play has some interest, but in every other way it amounts to excessively dull theatre.

This dullness, gradually increasing to stupor, was emphasized in the production staged by George Rylands and was doubly emphasized by the acting company. Doubtless believing to make the play more acceptable to modern audiences, the director softened the elements of horror to the point of complete ineffectiveness, and thus rid the play of one of its most important and vital ingredients. He further so conversationalized the stage action, even at its most violent moments, that the whole gave the impression of a performance by the late Readers' Theatre. The acting, as noted, contributed additionally to the débâcle. Elisabeth Bergner, in the name rôle, comported herself in the earlier portions of the play like a

stock company ingénue's understudy and in the later like the ingénue herself, and all with a thick German accent that Weber and Fields, let alone Sam Bernard, would have envied.

I observed that one of my distinguished colleagues praised the actress for her acquisition at length of some restraint and, also, for her subtle indication of growth in the rôle. As for the restraint, it seemed to me that Miss Bergner chose the wrong time for it and that, if ever her former lack of it was at least partly to be desired, this was the play and occasion. Her Duchess was so exaggeratedly and inappropriately quiescent that one felt she had mistaken the play for some little thing by Maeterlinck. As for the growth and development of character, so far as I could see it had infinitely less to do with any authentic acting than with wearing a long red wig in the early acts, taking it off and appearing in her short, natural hair in the middle section, and sprinkling talcum powder on the latter in the final section when age, agony and despair are supposed to overtake her.

QUESTION

BY MARY POOLE

TIME broke but did not bend her.
I wonder, was she wise —
so often to surrender
but never compromise?

A FORGOTTEN RAILROAD GENIUS

By STEWART H. HOLBROOK

MANY an able Yankee left his homeland in the 1840s and after to go West and build or operate the great railroads of the nation. Look into the early history of almost any Midwest or Western line and you will discover New Englanders among the officials and among the chief construction and operating men. There was one Yankee, however, who remained in his native Pine Tree State to conceive and to push through against savage opposition the original line that became the Grand Trunk and is now the Canadian National, one of the great railway systems (24,000 miles) of North America. He was John Alfred Poor, an indomitable and tireless man of great and varied talents who ought not to be but is largely forgotten. It was Poor who built the line through the Big Woods.

It was Poor, too, who waked his native Maine to the new era brought in by the steam cars. Born in 1808 at Andover, he taught school at Bethel, then went to Bangor to study law and to practice. He possessed considerably more intellectual curiosity than is usually granted to men who build railroads, and presently he was lecturing at the Bangor Lyceum, which he helped to found, and contributing

historical articles to newspapers. That he was also a "man of splendid beauty" — six-feet-two and 250 pounds, "of noble and commanding presence, with clean-cut Grecian features" — unquestionably prepared him to meet and conquer the opposition he was to encounter.

Massachusetts first became interested in railroads about 1832. Two years later, when the budding Boston & Worcester line was about to run its first train of steam cars, Poor made the long journey from Bangor to Boston to be present, on April 16, at the great event. It made a lasting impression on Poor; there and then it gave him his lifelong ambition.

I like to muse on this scene. Here was John Poor, age 26, a boy from the backwoods, come from farthest Maine, indeed from that city which Henry Thoreau likened to a star on the edge of night, hewing away at the forest of which it was built — come down from Bangor to see New England's first steam railway begin its career. Standing in the enormous crowd, Poor noted that the engine driver, who like the locomotive had come from England, stepped upon the platform with almost the air of a juggler. Then this important man put his

hand upon the lever, moved it slightly, and the monster started moving amid shouts and cheers.

One wonders what this or that one in the crowd thought he was seeing. One knows what John Poor thought. "It gave me such a shock," he said, "that my hair seemed to start from its roots rather than to stand on end." From that moment to the end of his life Poor often spoke of the impact of that scene upon his mind. The engine, he said, continued to grow into a greatness in his mind that left "all other created things far behind it as marvels and wonders."

It seems to me that here in this scene is subject matter for a wonderful mural, one which could grace the walls of the Canadian National's vast new station in Montreal. The legend might read: "John Alfred Poor, Railroad Genius, 1808-1871, Looking for the First Time upon a Railroad Engine." No one is more worthy of such a mural, for it was he who first envisioned a railroad system embracing all of New England, all of Quebec, the Maritime Provinces, and even what were soon to become the Prairie Provinces; and then went ahead to found such a system. Poor was a true fanatic; only a fanatic could have built his railroad.

II

The legislature of the state of Maine talked somewhat of railroads during the 1830s, but nothing came of the talk. Meanwhile Poor was quietly

looking over the land, not merely as a surveyor but as what would today be called a geopolitician. Before he was ready to air his views to his fellows, Poor studied every possible subject that might have a bearing on what he conceived of as not merely a railroad between two points, but as an all-embracing railway system, one that would be of mutual advantage to Canada and to Maine and, at least incidentally, to other portions of the United States. He made himself acquainted with the commercial, agricultural and manufacturing possibilities of the regions he had in mind. He studied the habits of the peoples concerned, both Canadians and Americans, and their political and economic notions. After he had digested a monumental amount of printed matter, and looked at countless maps, he set out by stage or buggy, and sometimes on foot, to see what the land looked like at first hand and to learn how the people felt about a railroad.

He was concerned not only with the people of Portland and Montreal, the two cities he had picked for terminals of his first line, but with the rustics and backwoodsmen all along the 300 miles between those cities. He saw and talked with them too. Swamp and meadow, valley and mountain, Poor saw them all at first hand, and their peoples. Chewed by black flies and mosquitoes, or frost-bitten, Poor made trip after trip into miles of seemingly interminable woods, the Big Woods, the forests of pine and spruce that enclosed the

Androscoggin from the sea to its headwaters, that followed the height of land over to the Connecticut's upper reaches, then followed another height of land over to the waters of the mighty St. Lawrence. He stopped at hamlets, logging camps, villages, stayed overnight at farmhouses, always talking, asking questions, learning what this or that man thought, what they believed a railroad could do for them.

It may have been and probably was John Poor who first in New England envisioned a railroad not as a mere convenience to an old settled community, but as a highway that should serve to develop uninhabited or sparsely settled regions, such as this howling wilderness between Portland and Montreal, and make them prosperous through agriculture, industry and commerce. In 1843 he was ready to act on his conception. He proposed publicly to build an international railway that would run between Portland and Montreal in the northwest, and Portland and Halifax in the northeast. These, he made clear, were merely the founding lines of the system he had in mind. The first extension was to be from Montreal to Chicago.

Poor's proposal created a sensation. In that day Portland was literally a deserted village, rich in retired capital but poor in enterprise. The great days of the sailing ships were past. Many citizens saw grass growing up through the cobbles of India and Pearl and Exchange Streets. Lights

still glowed at night from the headlands, yet comparatively few skippers took their bearings to enter Casco Bay. It is little wonder, with such a setting, that Poor's startling proposal for a vast railway system centering in Portland hit the city like "an alarm bell in the night, struck by the hand of a stranger." Within a few weeks Portland and much of Maine and the province of Quebec were excited as never before. Poor held meetings in Portland and then, true to his idea that people along the route should have opportunity to speak, in villages beside the line of the first road to be built. In all of the hamlets Poor roused the natives — then as now hardly a crowd to excite easily — to a pitch bordering on delirium. And in Montreal his message found ready reception.

Poor next engaged James Hall, a professional engineer, to make a survey for the Portland-Montreal line. Hall estimated the cost of building from Portland to the Canadian border at \$2,225,000, no small part of which was to go for clearing one of the thickest stands of timber in eastern North America. In the meantime, Montreal men were stirred to action, and a group headed by A. T. Galt prepared to build the line from that city to meet the Portland line at the border.

But villains were rousing in Boston. This crowd, having had plenty of time to get wind of Poor's proposal, moved quietly upon Montreal, and before Poor was aware of it, his

plan was in danger of being transferred to the Hub of the Universe. It was a most potent group these Boston men made up—including the Hon. Harrison Grey Otis, the Hon. Abbott Lawrence, and “three hundred and fifty-seven others, certified by the Mayor of Boston to be amongst the most wealthy capitalists and business men of the city.” The group also included such hardy Vermonters as Erastus Fairbanks, who was interested in the fact that the route from Boston to Montreal would pass through his home town of St. Johnsbury, where he made weighing scales. The Boston group chartered a new line called, with plain notice of intent, the Boston, Concord & Montreal. This was to be the route, so the Boston men informed the Montreal men, that would best serve Canadian interests. Indeed, should the Canadians be so inept as to give a preference to a different route (*i.e.*, Montreal-Portland) the Boston group intimated that the Canadians would have reason to be sorry ever after.

The implied threats of the Boston crowd, to which, no doubt, was added some fancy lobbying, began to change the ideas of the Montrealers. Where at first they had been glad to accept Poor’s proposals, they now saw that Boston had something to offer. In February of 1845 emissaries of the Boston, Concord & Montreal railroad were gathered in the last-named city, confident and ready to close an agreement by which the Canadian group was to build to meet

the line working north from Boston. John Poor, 300 miles away in Portland, first heard of this encroachment on February 4. At half-past midnight on the fifth he started out from Portland in the teeth of one of the worst storms of record. It was to be a journey he never forgot, a journey so terrible that Poor was six full months recovering. It was also one of the great epic trips having to do with American railroads.

III

As soon as he heard that the loathsome Boston men were in Montreal, wooing the Canucks toward Boston Harbor, Poor sent out a man to ride ahead and arrange for relays of horses. He himself, he planned, would go to Montreal, storm or not. The day of Wednesday the fifth was threatening. A dark and portentous sky hung over Maine, and at about ten that night came a wind that quickly increased to gale proportions and brought with it the first specks of dancing snow.

Before midnight, while Poor was frantically getting necessary papers together, the snow became a blizzard. Family and friends did their best to keep him from starting. Poor said no, the turning point in the history of Maine’s railroad to Montreal was at stake; he must go on, and damn the weather.

Poor could find but one man in all Portland, a Mr. Cheney—who must have been a redoubtable man—to accompany him. Bundled in furs and

with a spirited horse and stout sleigh, the two went off in the face of the northeast storm. Part of the way they held to the road, but the road soon disappeared and Poor and his companion were presently rolling over unseen stone walls, rail fences and woodpiles, while the horse did his best to dodge the larger drifts. The snow cut horse and men alike, and they bled. Poor found that the only way to protect his eyes was to allow icicles to form and hang down from his eyebrows; then, with the end of a finger, he melted a small hole through which to see. What tells more of the storm and the going than anything else was the time required to make Teak's Tavern in Falmouth town, seven miles from Portland. It was six hours.

Changing horses at Teak's, eating a hurried breakfast, Poor and Cheney were away with the first streak of dawn. Eighteen inches of new snow rested on the road, yet by dark the travelers had reached Mr. Waterhouse's hospitable house at Paris. Poor discovered his nose was frozen, and one ear nipped. Again the travelers rested, the horses were changed, and Poor tried to prevail on Waterhouse to go ahead for a while to break road. Waterhouse said not even the Devil could move him out on such a night; they must wait till morning. And before daylight, true to his word, old Waterhouse drove a powerful tandem team and battered through immense drifts on the way to Rumford, where he dropped out. At Rumford Poor found the snow deeper than

ever, but he managed to get half a dozen young men to ride ahead and break a horse-track as far as Andover.

All had gone well so far. But beyond Andover, as Poor well knew, there was to be no road, no track of any kind. He had now reached the real wilderness, the country out back of beyond, the Big Woods. For forty miles over the route he had to follow to Colebrook in New Hampshire he had to make his way as he went, and he also had to pass the extreme northern part of the White Mountains through Dixville Notch, a terror of a place which one traveler found like "a titanic gateway to some region of vast and mysterious desolation."

On they went. They found Andover Surplus and the Umbagog Lake region to be fairly free from drifts, yet they could barely cover two miles an hour. And so at last they came to the great test of the entire trip, Dixville Notch. At Erroll, N. H., before getting to the Notch, Poor found Captain William Bragg and three other men willing to help him over the height of land. They were needed. Although the temperature was 18° below zero, hard snow was still riding the wind; and as the party approached the Notch, gusts came through the deep narrow chasm with terrific force. All Poor could see was "perpendicular mountains of snow" through which there was no apparent pass. But Bragg, known as the Notch-Tender, knew what he was about, and after two-hours hard work by his crew, a path was opened in the

gigantic drifts. Slowly, very slowly, with an outrider ahead, the sleigh was got into the Notch and here it met a wind of such force, said Poor, it was not to be described at all.

The Notch, Poor related — and anyone who has ever been there in winter will believe him — the Notch roared and thundered like a bellows of the gods, as perhaps it is. The air was dark with thickening snow, and all creative forces seemed to have retreated from the spot and abandoned it to the sport of destructive elements. Here was Chaos and Old Night. A brave man, Poor nevertheless shook with fear as he listened to the wind and caught brief glances of the menacing cliffs on all sides. At last the horses were unhitched and led ahead in single file, while Poor and the other men heaved at the sleigh and inched it along up the steep rise. Thus they passed over the height of land, some 2000 feet above the sea.

It was better going west of the Notch. Poor and Cheney passed through Colebrook, then on to Sherbrooke, Quebec, which they reached on Saturday the eighth. They got new horses, then drove all night and all day Sunday to reach Montreal in the dark of Monday morning. They were still on the wrong side of the wide St. Lawrence, which was running with ice. Some time was occupied in finding and convincing a Frenchman that he should ferry the weary travelers across to the city. This was done, and Poor had a chance to sleep an hour or so before it was time to act.

IV

At ten that morning the Montreal Board of Trade was to meet for a final decision on the Boston proposal. These Canadians had no particular preference for Boston over Portland, or *vice versa*. But the Boston group had been long on the scene, while Poor had been absent since he had made his first proposal; and it seems certain that the Boston group must have represented, to the Canadians, a more substantial interest. But Poor was still to be reckoned with.

His great frame and ready mind refreshed by brief sleep, after the terrible five days in the wilderness, Poor walked unannounced into the Board of Trade meeting. With what must have been great eloquence as well as good judgment, he prevented the Board from adopting the resolution before it, a resolution to adopt the Boston plan, and got them to agree to consider his own proposal.

Poor told the assembled capitalists of the vast superiority of Portland Harbor over any other, including that of Boston. He dwelt upon the fact that Portland was 100 miles nearer Montreal than was Boston. He stressed the physical features of the route he proposed, saying they were much easier to conquer by rails than the Boston route — really a highly debatable point. And he threw in the weight of his likable personality. Then, while the Board still debated, another dramatic incident occurred: into the Board room strode Judge

William Pitt Preble of Portland, a moving spirit in Poor's enterprise, just arrived from the Maine city after a five-day trip over the route for which Poor had broken the trail. In his hand Judge Preble held a handsome charter, glittering with red seal and elegant script, for the Atlantic & St. Lawrence Railroad Company, granted on February 10 by the legislature of Maine.

It is probable that Poor had already turned the tide in favor of Portland; and now the appearance of Judge Preble and the splendid charter were evidence of such good faith and good business that the Montrealers were wholly won over. They voted for Portland, then went ahead to charter their own end of the railroad as the St. Lawrence & Atlantic.

Poor and Preble returned to Portland in triumph, and the new company went ahead to raise money. On the return home, however, Poor was taken ill, unquestionably from the effects of exposure on his journey. For many weeks he lay in bed, and in delirium. He had to use crutches for many months. It is doubtful if he ever completely recovered.

But the railroad went ahead, and on the Fourth of July, 1846, a huge crowd witnessed the laying of the first rail at the Portland end. Work began simultaneously at Montreal. The two cities were connected by rail in July of 1853, and the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada was organized to take

over the two subsidiary lines on a 999-year contract. From that point on, the Grand Trunk was continuously expanded until it became one of the great transcontinentals.

Although Poor's greatest work was now done, he continued to plan and build and reorganize railroads. He bought the *American Railroad Journal* and turned it over to his brother, Henry V. Poor, to edit, and out of this in time came the celebrated *Poor's Railroad Manual*, the classic publication of the industry. He called attention to the fertile lands of Maine's distant Aroostook county and proposed a railroad which was later built as the Bangor & Aroostook, the great pulp and potato carrier. He wrote excellent monographs on English colonization in America and many papers urging the state of Maine to make geological and water-power surveys. But he never quit the railroads, even though they never enriched him.

When John Poor died, in 1871, he was working hard on a road, called in fearful length the Portland, Rutland, Oswego & Chicago Railway Company; and was stricken, pen in hand, while composing an article on "Railroad Improvements."

Thus a true fanatic to the end, John Poor was doubtless one of the most influential men of his time, and also one of the really great prophets of the railroad. Let the Canadian National honor him with a mural.



Never neglect a cold!

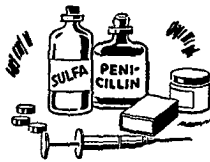


That will help avoid pneumonia. But if pneumonia *should* strike,



don't let it frighten you. Medical science, aid-

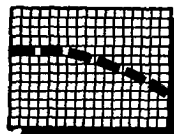
ed by the sulfas



and penicillin,

has reduced pneumonia mortality by about one half in the past 10 years.

If more people who have bad colds, or colds that hang on, would call their doctors, the pneumonia death rate would *drop still further.*



Remember, pneumonia is communicable, it works fast, and the worst months are ahead. *So, fight pneumonia by guarding against colds.*

Common colds need special care!

Try to keep in the best of health during the winter, for by keeping fit you lessen the risk of colds and pneumonia. However, if you get a bad cold, stay home and go to bed if possible, eat lightly, drink plenty of fruit juices and other liquids. Be especially careful not to get chilled.

Watch out for pneumonia's warning symptoms, which are usually a severe shaking chill followed by fever, coughing accompanied by sharp pains in the side or chest, and often rust-colored sputum. However, one type, *virus pneumonia*, starts slowly with a gradual rise in temperature, a feeling of chilliness

rather than a shaking chill, and a slight sore throat with a hard cough, but little or no sputum.

Some types of pneumonia, like virus pneumonia, do not respond to sulfa or penicillin. Whatever the type, calling the doctor quickly permits the prompt diagnosis and medical care which afford the best chance for rapid recovery. For other important information about pneumonia, influenza, and the common cold, send for Metropolitan's free booklet, 17L, "Respiratory Diseases."

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TO VETERANS—IF YOU HAVE NATIONAL SERVICE LIFE INSURANCE—KEEP IT!

HOW WE GOT OUR DIALECTS

BY FALK JOHNSON

DESPITE a general uniformity of language in the United States, a newcomer in many regions can be spotted at once by the way he talks. He may say *car* if he is from the Midwest, *cah* if from New England, and *ca* if from the South—all of them variations on the pronunciation of the single letter *r*. Aside from his quirks in pronouncing individual letters, he may give himself away by peculiarities of elision, slurring, stress, intonation or rate of speech.

Then if he talks long enough, he is bound to come up with unfamiliar words. If he is a Georgian, it may be *bodacious* for “bold and audacious.” If a Rhode Islander, he may speak of a see-saw as a *dandle*. Or if he is an Arizonan, he may refer to a prank as a *ranikaboo*.

These peculiarities of vocabulary and pronunciation raise several questions about our language. How did local differences get started? What effect are they now having upon our language? Will they decrease, making our language more uniform? Or will they increase, eventually developing several new languages and dividing

America into linguistic compartments like those of Europe?

These questions have fascinated American linguists for a long time. As early as the eighteenth century some enthusiastic scholars started to gather data on regional variations in our speech. Until 1889 these men usually worked sporadically and alone. In that year they formed a cooperative organization, the American Dialect Society, and later began a nationwide campaign for volunteers to help collect localisms.

In recent years, grants from philanthropic foundations have enabled our linguists to set out with paid and well-equipped staffs to explore the speech of the land scientifically. The most ambitious of these research programs is one which plans to map the geography of speech peculiarities in all North America. Begun in 1931 and still in process, this study is sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies and several universities. It is at work on a mammoth *Linguistic Atlas of the United States and Canada*, and a series of supplementary studies based on a continental survey. Headed by

FALK JOHNSON contributed “The Search for a Master Language” to the July AMERICAN MERCURY. He is now an instructor in English at Northwestern University. During the war he was with the Army’s signal intelligence service in Europe.

Dr. Hans Kurath of Michigan University, the staff has already published the section of the *Atlas* for New England, and has completed surveys of the Atlantic Seaboard and portions of the Great Lakes region.

Only professional philologists are sent into the field. Those who gathered material on New England and the South, for example, were trained scholars who had consulted with European linguistic geographers and made several trial surveys to perfect the special techniques required for this work.

In the field, these experts interview only a small percentage of the local residents, but the residents are selected as meticulously as those interviewed in the Gallup Poll. They are chosen to represent in the correct ratio such differences in location, age, education and ancestry as are likely to affect language. In order to encourage natural speech, the interviews are held in homes, fields, stores and offices; and the questions are so arranged that they seem to be merely key points in a series of friendly talks. These conversations are guided by a worksheet with 807 questions. The field worker may talk as long as twenty hours with an individual, and in addition prepare a phonograph recording of characteristic pronunciations.

After records and worksheets are sent in from the field, the editors of the *Atlas* subject each individual's pronunciation and vocabulary to a thorough laboratory analysis, break-

ing them down into their component parts. They try to detect the slightest variations in language from individual to individual, from age group to age group, and from district to district.

From such investigations answers to the fundamental questions about our dialects have begun to emerge. For one thing, we have begun to learn how we got our local speech differences.

II

The origin of our dialects is partly illustrated by the story of *angledog*, a New England word for "earthworm."

Field workers for the *Atlas* found that not many New Englanders use the word; it is common in only a few communities, and it is used only by older people. An 81-year-old farmer told the field worker, "*Angledog* was the only term I heard until I was grown up." A housewife of 74 said, "We often call 'em *angledogs*; my mother always did." And a spinster somewhere between 70 and 80 declared, "My father always said *angledog*. I don't know why."

From this information it began to look as if *angledog* were a relic, a word that stuck in one locality after disappearing from the surrounding areas. And it seemed to be disappearing here, too. Only persons more than 70 years old reported it, and they recalled it chiefly as a holdover from childhood. Certainly the word had disappeared from or had never reached most New England communities. Interviewers for the *Atlas* went from

the New York state line to the northern tip of Maine, but they found the usage of *angledog* concentrated in one small area — the lower valley of the Connecticut River. Only rarely did they find the word anywhere else.

Why? Why was *angledog* used chiefly in communities of one district? And why did it sometimes pop up in a few places widely separated from this district?

Members of the *Atlas* staff studied the histories of all the communities in which the word was found. They traced back the histories of the families in which it was used. And they discovered that wherever they found the word there had been at least a few settlers from Windsor, Connecticut, or nearby towns. It looked, therefore, as if *angledog* had come from Windsor. But why had the word previously been used only in the vicinity of Windsor?

Again the investigators went through town and family histories, and again they discovered a common origin for many of the settlers — the southwestern part of England, somewhere around Devonshire. The next step was to consult the *English Dialect Dictionary*, a huge work based on literally tons of reports gathered by volunteer collectors. It was found that *angledog* had been reported from only one region in England — Devonshire. It was obvious that the word had been brought to Windsor by colonists from Devonshire, that this Connecticut localism was without question an imported English localism.

The theory that many American dialects began as transplanted British dialects is not new. Scholars in the last century suggested it and gathered a good deal of evidence to support their suggestions. But only in recent years, as investigators have traced back to England innumerable words like *angledog*, has the theory become generally accepted.

But our language has received dialectal transfusions from other sources. From the Indians, for example, the Southerners got *pone*, meaning “cornbread.” From European countries immigrants have brought hundreds of words which are now localisms. An instance of this is *smearcase*, a word meaning a soft cheese, which is found in several areas settled largely by Germanic people and is seldom understood elsewhere. *Smearcase*, incidentally, is a partly-anglicized word which shows how pronunciation may change when two dialects or languages are spoken in the same place. The German word is *Schmierkäse*, and a complete anglicization would be *smearcheese* or *smear cheese*. Thus *smearcase* is about halfway between the original and anglicized forms.

Transplanting from British dialects and from native and European languages is only a part of the story of how we got our dialects. Many local words — like the Southerner’s telescoping of “bold and audacious” — cannot be traced back to any other dialect or language. They are our own creations.

Take *slab*, for instance. It is used

in some parts of the West and Midwest to designate a concrete highway, but in this sense it has not been reported in any other American or British dialect. It is local and original — a dialectal innovation. No doubt *slab*, which is short and picturesque, arose partly because “concrete highway” is a cumbersome and unimaginative expression — one lacking in bodacity. It came into use to fill a gap in our language.

So did *you-all*. It came into the language to supply a badly needed separate form for the plural of *you*. H. L. Mencken has pointed out that in the South “the true plural is commonly indicated by *you-all*, which, despite a Northern belief to the contrary, is seldom used in the singular save by the most ignorant.”

As a matter of fact, the uneducated Southerner’s feeling for the plurality of the expression is so strong that he sometimes says *you-alls*. *The Dictionary of American English*, one of the major subsidized studies of our language, has extracted an example from a magazine published in 1869: “During the war we all heard enough of ‘we-uns’ and ‘you-uns,’ but ‘you-alls’ was to me something fresh.”

This need for a plural form of *you* has led, not only to *you-all*, but also to such innovations as *youse guys*, *you folks*, and *you people*; and it has caused many languages, including French and German, to provide plural forms for *you*.

At the same time that innovations are coming into the language, relics

are leaving it. This fluctuating gain and loss of words is a process going on constantly in every area. In some regions it tends to create new dialects; in others it tends to bring about greater uniformity of speech.

Why these opposite results?

The answer involves an understanding of differentiation and standardization. The two forces are always working against each other in the shaping of language, differentiation tending to tear it into smaller and smaller pieces while standardization unifies it.

III

Consider differentiation first. If natural barriers or inadequate transportation cut off a place from the outside, then transplanting is stopped, innovations cannot be spread, and words which disappear on the inside may not disappear on the outside. As a result, the speech in the two places becomes more and more diverse and finally divides into two languages.

A few thousand years ago differentiation divided the Indo-European language into Latin, Greek, German and more than a half-dozen other tongues. Then it divided Latin into Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian and Rumanian; and it divided Old German into Icelandic, English, Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Dutch and Modern German. After the Renaissance, printing lessened the linguistic isolation of many communities and

limited the effectiveness with which differentiation worked.

Nevertheless, the force is not obsolete; it has divided modern British English into 42 dialects — 3 in Ireland, 9 in Scotland, and 30 in England and Wales. And it has made some of these dialects so dissimilar that a Lincolnshire farmer has difficulty understanding a Lancashire miner.

As a sample of these multiplying localisms, look at what differentiation has done throughout New England to a common word, *earthworm*. It has made more than a score of words out of it, some of them unintelligible to an outsider:

dirtworm, mudworm, muckworm, groundworm, angleworm, angling worm, angler, angledog, fishworm, fishing worm, casworm, eastworm, easterworm, eelworm, rainworm, redworm, simplex worm, night-walker, nightcrawler, nightprowler, crawler and bait.

This force of differentiation, which for thousands of years has been tearing languages into smaller and smaller pieces, has diminished recently, though it is not yet spent. Standardization, however, has become the dominant force in our language. It is the tendency which gradually makes the Southerner, after he has been in the North a while, feel self-conscious whenever he says *you-all*. Later it makes him avoid the expression.

Today, of course, the forces contributing to standardized speech are more powerful than ever before. Mass entertainment by radio and motion pictures, mass education, mass reading of national publications and mass traveling — all tend to build up uniform speaking habits. As a result, some of our many minor dialects — like that of the Gullah Negroes living on islands off the coast of South Carolina — have started to disappear, and our major dialects are few. For example, Dr. Kurath in his forthcoming *A Word Geography of the Eastern States*, shows only three major speech regions along the Coast — the New England, Middle Atlantic and South Atlantic. Preliminary studies indicate that the Middle West and West are even more uniform.

Now it is possible for a person to go anywhere in the United States and be understood immediately — though he may evoke a few smiles now and then. Sometimes it is possible for a person to be a thousand miles from home and still not be recognized as an outsider.

The forces for standardization are so strong that only a cataclysm of the first magnitude — something like an atomic war, pulverizing our mass society and making men live in small detached groups — can halt this trend toward uniformity.



HOUSING AND BIRTH CONTROL

By MILDRED GILMAN

THE young woman sat in the doctor's office seeking information that would help her defer having a baby. She wanted a baby badly; her long-range plans, in fact, called for three. Twenty-four years old, she was in good health and at the best age for childbearing. The chances were far above average that the child would be a fine addition to the population. Why then was she postponing the event?

Dr. Abraham Stone, who supervises the Marriage Consultation Center of New York's Community Church, has the answer thrust upon him daily. Says Dr. Stone: "Time and again I have had couples tell me that the only reason they were postponing childbearing was the lack of an adequate home. 'We want a baby very much,' the bride of some veteran will tell me, 'but not until we have a place of our own. It's hard enough as it is for us to live with my parents, and it wouldn't be fair under the circumstances to crowd a baby into the household.'"

Having heard this story repeated over and over again, Dr. Stone has concluded that "The people who are

refraining from having babies are the ones who would make the most desirable parents because of their foresight and thoughtfulness." But in his opinion the much-publicized housing shortage is responsible for more than the loss of future good citizens: "I am very much impressed with the fact that the lack of adequate home facilities is also responsible for a good deal of marital maladjustment."

Dr. Stone also recalls the story of a mother who stood recently beside her young son in juvenile court and listened while the case-worker explained that the child had a wartime history of living in trailer-camps and moving from one crowded rooming house to another; that he was at the moment part of a three-generation four-family setup in a tenement flat.

Multiply these two human problems by hundreds of thousands, remembering that families have increased by three millions since 1940, that some 1,400,000 veterans have married. Meditate on the assertion of Housing Expediter Wilson Wyatt that his program necessitates the

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building of 2,700,000 new homes in the next two years. Under these circumstances couples are to be commended for not having children now.

II

Mrs. Helen Duey Hoffman, former executive secretary of the Washington, D. C., Housing Association, laments that "Washington is filled with 'Birth control apartment buildings.'" She described these as one- and two-room apartments where people aren't supposed to have children. If a father and mother and baby live in one room and kitchen . . . the baby has no place to sleep but the bath tub." She found a hundred thousand District families with no children, and as usual discovered a great preponderance of children in the low-income families.

Everywhere, unfortunately, babies have become a liability in a period of housing shortage. Landlords in most cities are hardly inclined to look upon them as a community asset, and parents are made to feel guilty about having been so thoughtless as to procreate. Recently a bill had to be passed in New York state making it a misdemeanor for landlords to require that tenants remain childless.

One veteran reports that the four members of his family are forced to live in four different counties. Another has three small children who had to be sent to a guardian home when the house he and his family occupied was sold; he could find no

place which would take his family "if the children were included." A \$500 bribe for an apartment appears to be standard in some cities. Usually this is represented as the cost of the "furnishings." In one case a new tenant was confronted with a monthly tax for "upkeep of the garden" — which turned out to be a dirt lot twenty miles away, for which the landlord paid a dollar a year rental.

A committee of the New York State Legislature estimated recently that by the end of this year there will be in New York City alone 211,000 veterans' families in need of housing. But it has been estimated that the number of housing units available to meet this shortage, including such stopgaps as Quonset huts, converted Army barracks, rebuilt tenements, demountable houses, etc., will come to the pitiful total of 35,000.

To this staggering deficit add the needs of all the other cities in the country, many of them more overcrowded than New York, and you realize the increasingly desperate situation. One can only listen with wonder to the debates currently raging over the political expediency of veterans' housing, the costs, the zoning and building restrictions, the pros and cons of nationwide rent ceilings. Despite the efforts of the real-estate lobby, Congress has finally given housing the green light, but it is still up to the individual communities to act, and to do so quickly. "Room for baby" will not be available unless controls are restored to

building materials to avert the predicted 20 per cent rise in cost.

It is difficult for those who have the living space to imagine what life is like to the 1,200,000 families that Wilson Wyatt has estimated to be "doubling up" at this time. The mayor of Racine, Wisconsin recently asserted that in his city "as many as sixteen to twenty persons are living in one or two rooms."

III

A New York newspaper recently featured a homely little tale called "Parlor, Bedlam and Bath." This gave a brief but graphic account of the tribulations of a man and wife, their two veteran sons, the sons' wives and children, their daughter and the daughter's husband and children — all living in the parents' three-room apartment. "We're on the verge of nervous prostration," the son-in-law told the reporter. "I work overtime whenever I can so I won't get home until eight or nine o'clock. By then at least the children are in bed and most everyone has eaten."

They all agreed that "The kids are the ones who suffer. They've been sick all winter. One gets a cold, and they give it back and forth to the others." The veterans in this family have never stopped looking for living space. They found plenty of summer homes suitable for year-round housing, but these must apparently remain vacant two-thirds of the year so that landlords can take advantage of the

unlimited ceiling on summer rentals.

With stories and photographs the newspapers have dramatized the plight of veterans seeking the college education offered them by the government. We have all seen pictures of student veterans, their wives and often babies, living near campuses in one-room trailers. The University of Wisconsin, with remarkable effort and commendable success, has provided housing for 4526 additional students this year, most of them veterans with families. It has commandeered an air-forces training field and a powder plant and has leased 191 trailers from the Federal Public Housing Authority. The student veterans and their wives may succeed in adapting themselves to this makeshift existence for the sake of their postponed educations. But what of the infants and young children in these overcrowded trailer camps which today dot the country from coast to coast? These children will be growing up into a world in which they will often be treated as excess baggage in the feverish life of their parents.

A movie short recently showed a six-month old infant living in a large, air-conditioned cage or incubator devised by his proud father, presumably so the young hopeful could live in his parents' single room, impervious to smoke and noise. The psychological impact of this early environment should be worth studying.

There was a great wave of indignation in England when a supposedly well-planned government housing project allowed only one small bedroom

for the "family." (At the same time a government commission was paradoxically urging its citizens to increase Britain's population.) Similarly, in this country, most of the government and other housing projects allow only one bedroom for a mother, father and child under eight. Even under the best of conditions the crowding of parents and children into a single room has proved harmful to both. Many cases of sexual delinquency in the young have been traced to children becoming sexually precocious from sleeping in the same room with parents.

Even those veterans who can afford to build homes with two or three bedrooms are prevented from doing so by the restrictions and limitations which seem designed to discourage a well-planned family. This is especially tragic in view of the fact that, to quote Charles S. Ascher in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, "nearly every city in the United States has within its boundaries plenty of vacant, usable land to accommodate its population without overcrowding. For twenty-two American cities the average is 44.7 per cent vacant land. . . . There is no physical lack that keeps us from providing eight-room dwellings in which an average family can bring up three or four children, and if we demand a large-scale exodus from cities to that end we are throwing out the baby with the bath water."

President Truman has stated that in some categories juvenile delin-

quency has risen 350 per cent since Pearl Harbor. Sexual crimes among adolescents have increased. The *American Journal of Public Health*, analyzing the great increase in syphilis among teen-age girls, pointed to "The growing proportion of transients, removed from the restraining influences of familiar environment; intermittent unemployment; removal from school and home to overcrowded areas with inadequate housing, without privacy, without recreation and other normal living conditions."

IV

Bad housing also takes its toll in the mental health of our children. Children become liabilities to parents living in crowded quarters, and often develop patterns of rejection. When we realize that more than half the hospital beds in this country are filled with mental patients, we know that everything in our power should be done to attack this evil at its source.

The veterans and their wives who are unwilling to subject babies to the physical and psychological dangers of bad housing and overcrowding are the ones flocking to the planned-parenthood centers for help these days. And the least a lagging nation can do for them until it can properly house them is to make family planning help available. One young veteran stated vehemently at a New York center: "I don't want to raise a family in any of those contraptions I've read about — converted silos and aban-

doned roadside stands. Before I have a baby I want a decent home."

Another desperate ex-GI wrote to the National Committee on Housing suggesting that "Quonset huts be pitched on top of big city buildings. It would give the kids a little sun and air up there near the sky — when we can get around to having them."

This last phrase, repeated over and over by too many healthy young people, is what should bother the national conscience. The veteran and his wife, like so many of their kind, should be able to bring babies into the world now, while they are young and want them, while their fertility is at its peak.

Dr. Henry Pratt Fairchild of New York University, one of this country's leading demographers, has stated that "It is obvious that the more thoughtful and farsighted young married people, those with greater consideration for the proper environment of their future children, produce fewer of the children the nation needs most, while those less endowed with these traits continue to produce at their usual high rate."

Since even in normal times, that third of the nation with the least intelligence and the lowest income produces more than half our children, we can see how bad housing will further the deterioration of our population.

Mrs. Samuel I. Rosenman, Chairman of the National Committee on Housing, who has observed at firsthand some of the makeshift jerrybuilt homes our veterans are buying for far

too much money, commented recently: "We are forcing birth control on the veterans and their wives when we provide them with inadequate living space. How many children can we expect them to raise in the tiny two-bedroom houses we are erecting in our haste to get something over their heads?" She advocates a rental housing plan as more intelligent in the long run than our present "nation-wide orgy of poorly planned construction which, if it continues, can end only in social catastrophe."

Marital adjustment is a difficult enough problem under favorable conditions; its hazards are multiplied when homes are dingy, slipshod or crowded. In 1900 one in ten marriages ended in divorce. At the present rate — like the housing situation, growing steadily worse — it is estimated that only two in three marriages are destined to survive. At the beginning of this year there were 800,000 divorce proceedings on the books of our courts, with hundreds being added every day. No one has given us figures on the number of children who will be affected by these broken homes.

Communities that allow red tape and antiquated building codes, exorbitant cost of materials, sky-high rents or black market operations to tangle up their plans for housing veterans adequately should realize that much more is involved than profits and politics: the safety of babies, born and unborn — our greatest national asset — is at stake.

DOWN TO EARTH

BY ALAN DEVOE

Fleas

WE ARE accustomed, when we think of "nature," to think of the unpeopled wilderness, and to think in terms of such unalterably wild creatures as wolves, bears, eagles and moose. What we commonly mean by "wildlife" is something that we travel a journey to see: we take to canoes or packhorses or snowshoes, and, in some far forested place, we find "nature."

This habitual view of course does violence to the conception of nature, and of nature's fauna or animaldom, which a naturalist entertains. Nature, to a naturalist, is the inclusive entirety of all the passengers aboard this planet. The remote and elusive moose is indeed one item of the natural fauna; but so is the cockroach, inhabiting now its adopted faunal territory under the tenement sink. The loon on a lonely Adirondack lake is one specimen of our native wildlife. Another, to be regarded in no different temper of study and thoughtful consideration, is the housefly on the nearest windowpane. Our planetary passenger list numbers many, many thousands. They are all, in the same essential sense, parts of nature. With some of them we have become more closely associated than with others.

Our activities have changed the lives and habits of some of them, whether desirably or disastrously. But it remains the fact that they are all, aboriginally, members in the same general fellowship of wildlife: wolves, bears, earwigs, eagles or potato-beetles. To a naturalist's view, there is no absurdity but indeed exact accuracy in including, among the "wild animals," fleas.

A flea is so very small and obscure a creature that we hardly think of it as a being, an individual life, at all. We think of it only as what makes a dog scratch, or what adds one more quality of degradation to the desperate life of the very poor. To think of fleas is to think of huts and hovels and carelessly run kennels; and so inveterately do we thus think of fleas in exclusive connection with all the seamy and unsanitary side of human civilization that it hardly occurs to us to realize that a flea, after all, is actually as wild and as natural a creature as any other. There are fleas living out their flea-y lives in African jungles where no human being has ever gone. There are fleas living in an ancient relationship of peaceful parasitism exclusively upon Arctic hares. There are fleas of the forest, fleas of

the sand dunes, fleas that have made their home for millennia in the warm and sheltering habitat of birds' feathers. A flea, as such, has no more connotation of dirtiness and degradation than attaches to a hummingbird or a flowering larch. To a naturalist a flea presents itself very much as the whole creation presented itself to the mind of Thomas Aquinas, who was of opinion that each created thing was, in itself, good. If many and many a part of the creation has now an odium attaching to it, or has become a thing of distaste and shame, the reason — so that tough-minded philosopher suggested — should be looked for in our own peculiar power of corruption.

II

A flea is a being no more than the tenth or the twelfth part of an inch in over-all length, and organized with a severe simplicity for the performance of its destiny, which is the sucking of blood. The flea's body is strikingly compressed, not from back to belly like that of a wood louse (which must insinuate itself underneath the plates and scales of bark), but from side to side. A flea is high and narrow. This is a shape perfectly adapted to the flea's wending its way through the close forest of fur or feathers. Vision, for a life lived in such terrain, is of little significance. The flea's eyes are simple and unfaceted. In an existence of devoted parasitism, there is no function for wings. The flea is wing-

less. It has two short, thick antennae, for obtaining those obscure data necessary to its accommodating itself to its surroundings; and it has, pre-eminently, enormously powerful long legs for jumping and hugely effective mouth parts for sucking. Its mind or consciousness may confidently be assumed to be of the tiniest. A flea has a certain responsiveness: a reflexive obedience to smells and temperatures, an escape reaction when attacked. It has the urgency which accomplishes the begetting of more fleas. It has a certain sense-skill in the act of bite and suck. With no greater inventory of gifts than these, it is equipped to pursue successfully its rôle of ancient parasitism.

Threatened by attack, a flea can make a vertical leap of at least eight inches. This is as though a man should have the power to spring into the air to a height of five or six hundred feet. Laterally, a flea can hurl itself rather more than thirteen inches, which — in human terms again — is as though a man should make a bound of something like a fifth of a mile. It is the general rule of nature that when a creature has only a very small equipment of mind, if any, but occupies a biological position in which it must meet the full rigors of the problem of survival, it has some special physical development to even, as it were, its advantage. When the dull, dim little lizard called a "glass snake" is seized by the tail, it has the startling ability to detach the tail and scurry safely away to grow a new one. The slow and

blurry-minded porcupine has an armament that makes it a match for any keener-witted lynx. The biological success of a flea derives very largely from its being incomparably the most prodigious jumper in the world.

There are also other factors contributing to the welfare and multiplication of fleas. The extreme compressed thinness of the slippery, tough-shelled body makes a flea very difficult to seize and crush. The arrangement of egg-laying, and the pattern of development from egg to maturity, effect a high survival-rate.

A flea lays its eggs in between the hairs or feathers of the creature it is

inhabiting, but the eggs are not actually attached to the fur or plumage. As the flea-bearing animal moves around or lies down, the flea eggs are dislodged from it and fall to the ground. After some three or four days, in normal circumstances, the flea eggs hatch forth very small, thin, white larvae. These larval fleas are not parasitic upon any animal. They feed upon whatever microscopic particles of organic matter may be available in the place where the accidents of circumstance have brought about their birth. Wiggling down under a leaf, into any little dark interstice, they begin a process of feeding and

*Flea**Frank Utpatel*

skin-shedding like any caterpillar. Usually within two weeks or less of their hatching, they have twice shed their skins and are ready now for pupation. The larval flea sets about weaving for itself a delicate silk cocoon. Enswathed, changed to a pupa, it remains in this phase for some four or five days. At the end of that period — a total period that may not have spanned much more than two weeks since the laying of the eggs — there emerges the flea in its final form familiar to us. It is ready to hop aboard the first nutritious passerby and set to work, with sharp piercing and cutting stylets and powerful sucking-tube, upon what is the one mission of its small and obscure life.

III

In the traditional Christian account of the beginning of things, God looked upon the creation, in the hour of its fresh and immaculate readiness, and found that it was good. In this divine judgment, it is to be supposed, the flea must have been included. Without venturing into the wilds of theodicy, a naturalist can at least say that there is nothing essentially absurd in the proposition.

In a state of nature, when fleas are "in their place," they function as disseminators among the animals of a variety of diseases which periodically lessen animals' numbers and are a factor (among innumerable other factors) in the natural maintenance of the whole complex order of the animal

community. Though fleas by millions and billions have been proliferating in fur and feathers for millennia, it is evident enough, from the thriving survival of fur-bearers and feather-bearers, that flea-borne disease is not, in the natural order, fatally widespread and damaging to the community. The flea, *qua* flea, need hardly try the faith even of a much less wily worshiper than Thomas Aquinas. The trouble with fleas is not the facts of fleadom but the facts of humanity.

Where men have lived lives of dirt and degradation, they have encouraged fleas to an increase and multiplication beyond the wildest possibilities of natural conditions. Where huts or houses go uncleaned and untended, there are harbored rats. Where there are rats, there is always the chance of bubonic plague, which is a rat ailment. Where there are rats in concentrated abundance, there are fleas in concentrated abundance to ride upon them. And where there is a dirty and rat-infested dwelling, there are cracks and crannies where flea eggs can survive, and flea larvae feed and hide, with a success fantastic. A flea is no "dirtier" than any other being. It is no more evil a thing to feed, like a flea, upon blood, than to feed like a bee upon the nectar of spring blossoms. But it lies within our power to take any thing or things of earth and, working upon them a nasty alchemy, make what was good corrupt.

Had our culture-pattern taken some slightly different form, it is entertaining to reflect, the distaste we

now feel for fleas might be directed to some other sort of creature altogether. We might, having corrupted them, hold bluebirds in abomination; we might have a kind of shuddering dread of lilies; we might see only a symbol of disease and dirt when a moth fluttered past us in the dusk. The evil is not in things. It is in what

things can be made. If we are disturbed and disgusted by a flea — that small denizen of the outdoors, that innocent ingredient of the natural economy — it is perhaps not chiefly because of what actually we see before us. Partly perhaps, much deeper, it is a little stir and shiver of the ancient shame of the world.



FOR A SMALL CHOIR

BY CHARLES ANGOFF

ALL is chaos,
 A Never ending.
 Only flowers
 Know the meaning.

Day is night,
 Light is darkness.
 The infinite scorns
 The mind's madness.

Logic and clarity
 Are fools' instruments.
 Planets do not need
 Such garments.

There is hope,
 Fierce and stark,
 In a girl's dream
 Or a comet's arc.

But all is chaos
 As time and space
 Leap and swirl
 In the endless race.

BOOM TOWN

A Story

By THOMAS WOLFE

THROUGH the windows of the train he could see the flat, formless earth of New Jersey, loaded with its swarming weight of men and cities, with slum, swamp, and filthy tenements, with suburb and the ugliness of industry — cinder and yard and rust and waste, stubble and field and wood, steel and smoke-glazed glass and factory chimney, stroking forever past the moving windows into the infinite progressions of the stifled land. All through the early afternoon this flat uncharacterized earth faded away into the powerful and weary hazes of the heat: the earth was parched and dusty looking, hot with coarse yellowed grasses and the withered stalks of flowerless weeds. Then, under a glazed and burning sky the train pounded down across the states of Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland, paused for forty minutes in the fading glow of a weary day at Washington, and towards dark slowly rum-

bled over the Potomac and entered the broad heat-stricken Commonwealth of Virginia. It was the end of June: already the weather had grown very hot and there had been no rain for weeks.

A gigantic panorama of a continent gasping for its breath unfolded as the train rushed on: everywhere within the hot green airless depth of the train and outside, at stations on the pauses of the journey, the talk was all of drought and heat: in great engines steaming slowly on the tracks, or passive as great cats, the engineers were wiping wads of blackened waste across their grimy faces, the wilted passengers in other trains fanned feebly at their faces a sheaf of languid paper, or sat in a soaked and sweltering dejection.

All through the night he lay in his dark berth and watched, as he had watched so many times before, the old earth of Virginia as it stroked past him in the dream-haunted silence of

THOMAS WOLFE, one of the most exciting of modern American writers of fiction, died in 1938 at the threshold of a career that seemed stupendous in its promise. "Boom Town," which first appeared in the May 1934 issue of THE AMERICAN MERCURY, is a fair sample of his vast imaginative resources. It later formed a chapter of *You Can't Go Home Again*, and is reprinted here (with the permission of the publishers, Harper and Brothers) as one of a series of memorable contributions to the MERCURY of past years. (Copyright, 1934, by Maxwell Perkins as Executor.)

the moon. Field and hill and gulch and stream and bridge and dreaming wood, then field and hill and gulch and stream and wood again, the old earth, the everlasting earth, the huge illimitable and unbounded earth of America, kept stroking past him in the steep silence of the moon.

All through the ghostly stillness of the land, the train made on forever its tremendous noise fused of a thousand sounds and haunted by the spell of time. And that sound evoked for him a million images: old songs, old faces and forgotten memories, and all strange, wordless, and unspoken things men know and live and feel, and never find a language for, the legend of dark time, the sad brevity of their days, the strange and bitter miracle of life itself. And through the thousand rhythms of this one design he heard again, as he had heard ten thousand times in childhood, the pounding wheel, the tolling bell, the whistle-wail. Far, faint and lonely as a dream, it came to him again through that huge spell of time and silence and the earth, evoking for him as it had always done, its tongueless prophecy of life, its wild and secret cry of joy and pain, and its intolerable promises of the new lands, morning and a shining city.

But now the strange and lonely cry of the great train, which had haunted his whole life and which, far and faint from some green mountain valley of the South, had come to him so often as a child at night, bringing to him huge promises of flight and darkness,

was speaking to him with an equal strangeness of return. For he was going home again. And sudden, blind and furious as all his wanderings had been, was his return. He was going home again, and he did not know the reason for his going.

What was he looking for? What did he hope to find at home? He did not know. A restless wanderer, twenty-five years old, an obscure instructor at one of the universities in the city, a nameless atom in the terrific man-swarm of the city's life, he was not by any standard which his native town could know—"successful," "a success." And more than anything, he feared the sharp, the appraising eye, the worldly judgments of that little town. Yet now he was returning to it. Why?

Suddenly, a memory of his years away from home, the years of wandering in many lands and cities, returned to him. He remembered how many times he had thought of home with such an intensity of passion that he could close his eyes and see the scheme of every street in town, and every house upon each street, and the faces of ten thousand people, as well as the memory of all their words, the densely woven fabric of all their histories.

Why had he felt so, thought so, remembered with such blazing accuracy, if it had not mattered, and if, in the vast homeless unrest of his spirit; this little town, and the immortal hills around it, was not the only home he had on earth? He did not know. All that he knew was that the years

flow by like water and that one day men come home again.

The train rushed onward through the moonlit land.

II

When he looked from the windows of the train the next morning the hills were there again: they towered immense and magical into the blue weather, and suddenly coolness was there, the winey sparkle of the air and the shining brightness, and it seemed to him that he had never left them and that all which had passed in the years between was like a dream.

Above him was the huge bulk of the hills, the looming shapes around him, the dense massed green of the wilderness, the cloven cuts and gulches of the mountain passes, the dizzy steepness, and the sudden drops below. He could see the little huts stuck to the edge of bank and gulch and hollow, set far below him in the gorges, toy-small, yet closer, nearer than a dream. All this, so far, so near, so strange and so familiar, refound like something we have always known and remembered, lost the instant that we find it, the everlasting stillness of the earth now meeting the intimate toiling slowness of the train as it climbed upward round the sinuous curves, was near and instant as a vision, more lost yet more familiar than his mother's face.

At last the train came sweeping down the long sloping bend into the suburban junction two miles from

town, where his family always met him when he came home. But even before the train had come to a full halt at the little station, he had looked out of the windows and seen with this same sense of instant recognition, the figures of his mother and his brother, waiting for him on the platform as he knew that he would find them.

He could see his brother, Lec, teetering restlessly from one flat foot to another as his glance went back and forth along the windows of the train in search of him. He could see his mother's strong short figure, planted solidly, her hands clasped across her waist in their loose and powerful grip, her white face with its delicately pursed mouth turned toward the windows of the train, her glance darting back and forth with the curious, startled, animal-like swiftness and intensity all her family had.

And even as he swung down from the car-steps of the Pullman and, valise in hand, strode towards the platform across the rock ballast of the roadbed and the powerful gleaming rails, he knew instantly, with this intuitive feeling of strangeness and recognition, just what they would say to him at the moment of their meeting.

Now his mother and his brother had seen him. He could see his mother speak excitedly to his brother, and motion towards him. And now his brother was coming towards him on the run, his broad clumsy hand extended in a gesture of welcome, his

rich tenor shouting greetings at him as he came:

"How are you, boy?" he shouted. "Put it there!" he cried heartily as he came up and vigorously wrung him by the hand. "Glad to see you, John."

And still shouting greetings, he reached over and attempted to take the valise. The inevitable argument, vehement and protesting, began immediately, and in another moment, as always, the older brother was in triumphant possession and the two were walking together towards the platform, Lee shouting scornfully all the time in answer to the other's protests: "Oh, for God's sake! Forget about it! I'll let you do as much for me when I come up to the Big Town to visit you! . . . Here's mama!" he said abruptly, as they came up on the platform. "I know she'll be glad to see you!"

She was waiting for him with the bridling and rather confused movement that was characteristic of her in moments of strong excitement. Her powerful and delicate mouth was smiling tremulously, her worn faded brown eyes were wet with the tears which the sight of a train and of someone arriving and departing always seemed to cause.

"Hello, mama," he said, somewhat thickly and excitedly. "How are you, mama?"

He hugged her hard, planting a clumsy kiss on her white face. In a moment they released each other, and his mother, holding his hand in her

strong warm clasp, stepped back a pace and regarded him with the old tremulous, half bantering expression she had used so often when he was a child: "Well, well, well!" she said. "Hm-m!" she said, making a little humming noise as she spoke. "My ba-baby!"

John reddened in the face, made an awkward and indefinite gesture, and could find nothing adequate to say. Then he looked quickly at his brother; for a moment they regarded each other with a tormented glance, then both began to grin at the same time, he sullenly, his brother with a wide, swiftly developing grin of wild exuberance, which suddenly split his handsome face with an idiotic and exultant glee. That wild grin was followed immediately by the tremendous chortling of mad laughter, the huge "Whah — whah-h! — Haw-w!" his brother cried, smiting his forehead with the back of one clumsy hand. "My baby — haw-w!" he cried again and smote himself. "God-damn!"

"Well, now, sonny boy," his mother now said briskly, "come on, now! I've got a good breakfast waiting for you when you get home!"

"How's Helen, mama," John broke in, somehow disturbed by the failure of his sister to meet him.

"Hah? What say? Helen?" she said quickly, in a sharp, surprised kind of tone. "Oh, she's all right. And yes, now! She called up before we left this morning and said to give you her love and tell you she'd be over later. Said

she wanted to come along to meet you but had to stay at home because Roy McIntyre had 'phoned her he had a prospect for that place of theirs on Weaver Street and wanted to bring him over right away to look at it. Of course, she and Hugh are anxious to sell, want to move out there and build on one of those lots they own on Grovewood Terrace. Say they'll take eight thousand for the house — two thousand down, but I told her to take cash. I told her not to listen to Roy McIntyre if he tries to trade in on the deal any of those lots he's got up there on the hill in Ridgewood."

Here she gestured toward the hill that swept back in a slope of massed leafy green behind the railroad tracks, and with a short and almost convulsive tremor of her strong, pursed face, she shook her head in a movement of emphatic negation.

"Mama!" Lee, who during the course of these remarks had been teetering restlessly back and forth on his large feet, thrusting his fingers through his flashing hair in a distracted manner, and finally consulting his watch uneasily, now spoke in a tone of patient but somewhat strained courtesy: "I think if we get started —"

"Why, yes!" she cried instantly in a tone of briskly cheerful but rather startled agreement. "That's the very thing. This very minute, sir! I'm ready any time you are! Come on!" and she started to move off with a confused and bristling movement of her strong frame.

"But as I say, now," she continued,

quickly, now turning to John again, "I told her not to listen to him if he wants to swap. No, sir!" Here she shook her head emphatically. "I told her — if that's what he's trying to do I'd pay no attention to him for a minute! Hm!" — she shook her head with a little scornful smile — "That's what he was tryin' to get me to do. Why here, now! Yes! You see what he was up to, don't you? Why, didn't he try the very same trick on me? Didn't he come to me? Didn't he try to trade with me? Oh, here, along you know the first part of last April," she said impatiently with a dismissing gesture of her broad hand, as if all this splintered and explosive information must be perfectly clear to everyone — "with Dr. Gibbs, Rufe Mears, Erwin Featherstone, and all the rest of that crowd that's in with him. Says: 'I'll tell you what I'll do. We know you're a good trader, we respect your judgment, and we want you in,' he says, 'and just to have you with us, why, I'll trade you three fine lots I own up there on Pinecrest Road in Ridgewood for that house and lot you own on Preston Avenue.'"

"Says: 'You won't have to put up a cent of your own money. Just to get you in with us I'll make an even swap with you!' 'Well,' I says —"

III

"Mama," John broke in desperately, stunned and bewildered by this mad obsession which had so completely filled and conquered her that every-

thing else on earth — home, friends, children, absence and return, the whole chronicle of her life had been submerged and for the time forgotten:

"Mama," he began desperately again, but bewildered, not knowing what to say, "don't you think it would be better if . . ."

"Hah? What say?" Startled from that flood-tide of her obsession, she looked suddenly at him with the quick, instant attentiveness of a bird. "Well, as I say, you see now," she went on, seeing that he did not answer. "Said to him when they first came to me — Roy McIntyre, old Gibbs, and then of course, that's so —" she went on reflectively, "Rufe Mears was there as . . ."

"Couldn't we?" John blurted out with the blind confusion of a man who has suddenly come upon an undiscovered continent. "Why, couldn't we go home now, and eat our breakfast and then call up Helen — couldn't we —"

"Why, yes! The very thing! I'm ready, sir!"

"I think, mama," Lee now said gently with the tortured pleading, almost comic patience of exasperation, "I think that if we could —" and at this moment his tormented eyes suddenly met, stopped, rested for a moment on the astounded, bewildered look his brother gave him. For a minute they looked at each other with earnest, asking looks — then suddenly the bursting of wild glee upon his brother's face.

"Haw-w," Lee yelled, "haw-w,"

prodding his brother in the ribs, "haw-w!" he cried. "You'll see — oh, you'll see, all right!" he gloated. "Frankly I have to laugh when I think about it. Frankly I do!" he said earnestly. Then looking at the astonished face before him, he burst out into the devastating roar again: "Haw-w! Whah-whah-h! You'll see," he said mysteriously and mockingly. "Oh, you'll get it now," he cried. "Nineteen hours a day, from day-break to three o'clock in the morning — no holts barred!" he chortled. "They'll be waiting for us when we get there," he said. "They're all lined up there on the front porch in a reception committee to greet you and to cut your throat, every damn mountain grill of a real estate man in town. Old Horse Face Hines, the undertaker; Skin-em-alive Roy McIntyre; Skunk-eye Rufe Mears the demon promoter, and old squeeze-your-heart's blood Gibbs, the widder and orphan man from Arkansas; — they're all there!" he said gloatingly. "She told 'em you're a prospect and they're waiting for you — every cutthroat swindler of a real estate man in town! It's your turn now!" he yelled. "She's told 'em that you're on the way and they're drawin' lots right now to see which one gets your shirt and which one takes the pants and B.V.D.'s. Haw-w! Whah-whah-h!" he poked his younger brother in the ribs.

"They'll get nothing out of me," John said angrily, "for I haven't got it to begin with."

"Haw-w! Whah-whah-h!" Lee

yelled. "That doesn't matter. If you've got an extra collar button, they'll take that as the first instalment, and then and then — haw-w! — they'll collect your goddam cuff-links, socks, and your pants suspenders in easy instalments," he said gloatingly, "as the years roll on. Haw-w! *whah-h!*" he yelled, prodding his brother with clumsy fingers as he saw the sullen and astounded look upon his face. Then, seeing his mother's white, pursed and reproving face, he suddenly prodded *her* in the ribs, at which she shrieked in a vexed manner and slapped at his rough hand.

"I'll vow, boy!" she cried fretfully. "What on earth's the matter with you? Why, you act like a regular idiot. I'll vow you do!"

"Haw! Whah-h!" he yelled again. Then, still grinning, he picked up the valise and started rapidly across the station platform towards his battered little car which was parked at the curb not more than twenty yards away.

And in this manner, accompanied every foot of the way by his mother's torrential discourse which gave him with encyclopaedic fullness the speculative history of every piece of real estate they passed, punctuated from time to time by his brother's rude prodding fingers in his ribs, the limitless and exultant madness of his great "whah-whah-h," the youthful native, after years of wandering, returned to his own town again — and found there a strange mad life, a glittering city, a wild and drunken fury he had never seen before.

IV

The streets were foaming with a mad exuberant life, crowded with a strange expensive traffic, with a thousand points of glittering machinery, winking and blazing imperially in the hot bright air, filled with new faces he had never seen. And the faces of the people he had known shone forth from time to time like a remembered door, like a street he had gone to once, or like lights in the enormous darkness of a lonely coast. And yet on the faces of everyone, natives and strangers alike, there was burning the drunken glow of an unholy glee. Their feet swarmed and scampered on the pavements, their bodies darted, dodged, thrust and twisted as if the leaping energy of some powerful drug was driving them on. For the first time he witnessed the incredible spectacle of an entire population which was drunk — drunk on the same powerful liquors, drunk with an intoxication which never wore off and which never made them weary, dead, or sodden, but which drove them on constantly to new heights of leaping and scampering exuberance.

The people he had known all his life cried out to him along the streets, they seized his hand and shook it, saying, "Hi, there, boy! . . . Glad to see you home again! . . . Going to be with us for a while now? Good! I'll be seeing you, I've got to go on now, I've got to meet a fellow down the street to sign some papers! Glad to see you, boy!" — and they would

vanish, having uttered this tempestuous greeting without a pause and without the loss of a stride, pulling and dragging him along with them as they wrung his hand.

The conversation was terrific and incessant — a tumult of voices united in variations of a single chorus: speculation and real estate. They were gathered in groups before the drug stores, before the post-office, along the curbs, before the court house and the city hall. They hurried along the pavements talking together with a passionate absorption of earnestness, bestowing a half-abstracted nod of greeting from time to time on some acquaintance who was passing. The real estate men were everywhere. Their motors and buses roared through all the streets of the town and out into the country, bearing crowds of prospective clients. One could see them on the porches of houses unfolding blueprints and prospectuses as they shouted enticements and promises of sudden wealth into the ears of deaf old women. Everyone was game for them — the lame, the halt and the blind, Civil War veterans or their decrepit pensioned widows, as well as high school boys and girls, Negro truck drivers, soda-jerkers, elevator-boys, boot-blacks.

Everyone bought real estate; and everyone was a "real estate man" either in name or practice. The barbers, the lawyers, the grocers and butchers and builders and clothiers were all engaged now in a single interest, a common obsession. And there

seemed to be only one rule, a dominant and infallible law — to buy, always to buy, to pay whatever price was asked and to sell again within two days at whatever price one chose to fix. It was fantastic: within the town, along any of its streets, the property was being sold by the inch, the foot — thousands of dollars were being paid for each front foot of earth along these streets, and when the supply of streets was exhausted, new streets were created feverishly, and even before these streets were paved or a house had been built upon them the land was being sold by the inch, the foot, for hundreds and thousands of dollars.

A spirit of drunken waste and wild destructiveness was everywhere apparent: the fairest places in the town were mutilated at a cost of millions of dollars. In the center of town, for instance, there was a beautiful green hill, opulent with rich lawn and lordly trees, with beds of flowers and banks of honeysuckle, and surmounted with an immense rambling old wooden hotel. It was a glorious old place which was a labyrinth of wings and corridors, of great parlors, porches, halls and courts, which had for forty years been the most delightful place in town, and from which as lovely and magical a landscape as the earth can offer — the vast panorama of the ranges of the "Smokies" — could be seen. Now they advanced upon this enchanted hill.

John could remember the immense and rambling old hotel with its wide

porches and comfortable rockers, its countless eaves and gables, elfin, Gothic, capricious and fantastic, the thick red carpets of the wide corridors, and the old lobby, a place of old red leather hollowed and shaped by the backs of men, of the smells of tobacco and the iced tinkle of tall drinks. It had a splendid mellow dining-room filled with laughter and quiet voices, and unctuous expert niggers, bending and scraping and chuckling with glee over the jokes of the rich men from the North as with a prayerful grace they served them delicious foods out of old silver dishes.

He could remember all these things as well as the tender or smiling looks and glances of the glorious women, the rich men's wives and daughters. And he would be touched with the unutterable mystery of all these things — of beauty, wealth and fame, and of these splendid travelers who had come great distances, who brought with them somehow a marvelous evocation of the whole golden and unvisited world, with its thousand fabulous cities and with all its proud, passionate song of glory, fame and love.

Now this was gone: an army of men and shovels had advanced upon this great green hill and leveled it down to an ugly mound of clay, and they had paved that clay with a desolate horror of hard white concrete, they had built stores and garages and office buildings and parking spaces — raw and new — and they had built a new hotel where the old one was. It was a structure of sixteen stories of pressed brick

and concrete, harsh and sharp and raw, which seemed to have been stamped out of the same mold as a thousand others throughout the country by some gigantic biscuit-cutter of hotels, and which was called, sumptuously, the Ritz-Altamont.

V

Suddenly, one day, in the midst of all this glittering tumult, he met Robert Weaver, a classmate at college, and a boyhood friend. He came down the thronging street swiftly at his anxious lunging stride, and immediately, without a word of greeting, broke hoarsely into the abrupt and fragmentary speech that had always been characteristic of him, but that now in the pulsing stimulation of this atmosphere, seemed feverishly emphasized.

"When did you get here? . . . How long are you going to stay? . . . What do you think of the way things look here?" Then, without waiting for an answer, he demanded with a brusque, challenging and almost impatient scornfulness: "Well, what do you intend to do — be a two-thousand-dollar-a-year schoolteacher all your life?"

The contemptuous tone with its implication of superiority — an implication which among this swarm of excited people big with their importance of imagined achievement and great wealth he had felt keenly since his return — now stung John to retort sharply:

"There are worse things than teach-

ing school! Being a paper millionaire is one of them! As for the two thousand dollars a year, you really get it, Robert. It's not real estate money, it's money you can spend. You can buy a ham sandwich with it."

He laughed sharply. "You're right!" he said. "I don't blame you. It's the truth!"

He began to shake his head slowly. "Lord, Lord!" he said. "They've all gone clean out of their heads here . . . Never saw anything like it in my life . . . Why, they're all crazy as a loon," he swore. "You can't talk to them . . . You can't reason with them . . . They won't listen to you . . . They're getting prices for property here you couldn't get in New York."

"Are they *getting* it?"

"Well," he said, with a falsetto laugh, "they get the first five hundred dollars . . . You pay the next five hundred thousand on time."

"How much time?"

"God!" he said, "I don't know . . . All you want, I reckon . . . Forever! . . . It doesn't matter . . . You sell it next day for a million."

"On time?"

"That's it!" he cried, laughing. "You make a half million just like that."

"On time?"

"You've got it!" said Robert. "On time . . . God! Crazy, crazy, crazy," he kept laughing and shaking his head. "That's the way they make it," he said.

"Are you making it, too?"

His manner at once became feverishly earnest and excited: "Why, it's the damndest thing you ever heard of!" he said. "I'm raking it in hand over fist! . . . Made three hundred thousand dollars in the last two months . . . Why, it's the truth! . . . Made a trade yesterday and turned around and sold the lot again not two hours later . . . Fifty thousand dollars just like that!" he snapped his fingers. "Does your mother want to sell that house on Spring Street? . . . Have you talked to her about it? . . . Would she consider an offer?"

"Yes, if she gets enough."

"How much does she want?" he demanded impatiently. "Would she take two hundred and fifty thousand?"

"Could you get it for her?"

"I could get it within twenty-four hours," he said. "I know a man who'd snap it up in five minutes . . . I'll tell you what I'll do, John, if you persuade her to sell, I'll split the commission with you . . . I'll give you five thousand dollars."

"All right, Robert, it's a go. Could you let me have fifty cents on account?"

"Do you think she'll sell?" he said feverishly.

"I don't think so. I think she's going to hold on."

"Hold on! What's she going to hold on for? Now's the time when things are at the peak. She'll never get a better offer!"

"I know, but we're expecting to

strike oil out in the backyard at any time now."

At this moment there was a brilliant disturbance among the tides of traffic in the street. A magnificent motor car detached itself from the stream of humbler vehicles and crawled in swiftly to the curb where it came to smooth stop — a panther of opulent machinery, a glitter of nickel, glass and burnished steel.

From it, a gaudily attired creature stepped down to the pavement with an air of princely indolence, tucked a light malacca cane carelessly under its right arm-pit, and slowly and fastidiously withdrew from its nicotined fingers a pair of lemon gloves, at the same time saying to the liveried driver:

"You may go, James. Call for me again in hal-luf an houah!"

The creature's face was thin, sunken, and as swarthy as a Mexican's; its coal black eyes glittered with the unnatural fires of the drug addict; its toothless jaws had been so bountifully furnished forth with a set of glittering false teeth that they now grinned and clattered at the world with the prognathous bleakness of a skeleton. The whole figure, although heavy and shambling, had a caved-in and tottering appearance that suggested a stupendous debauchery. It moved forward with its false bleak grin, leaning heavily upon the stick, and suddenly John recognized that native ruin which had been known to him since childhood as Rufus — or Rufe — Mears.

VI

J. Rufus Mears — the "J" was a recent and completely arbitrary addition of his own, fitting in, no doubt, with his ideas of financial and personal grandeur, and matching the dizzy pinnacle at the summit of the town's affairs on which he was now perched — was the black sheep of a worthy and industrious family in the community.

From the beginning, Rufe's career had been lurid, capricious and disgraceful. A dark and corrupt energy was boiling ceaselessly within him to wrest a living and quick wealth from life in some shady or precarious fashion. He was haunted constantly by the apparition of "easy money." On one occasion he had been sentenced to a term in jail for operating gambling machines; on another he had been sent to the chain gang for running a "blind-tiger"; on yet another, he had got into serious difficulties when he began to tour the small towns in the district with a burlesque musical show, the chorus of which had been recruited from ignorant girls in the neighborhood who had had no experience in the theatre whatever and were lured into the unsavory enterprise by Rufe's plausible dark tongue.

In recent years, his physical and mental disintegration had been marked; he had become an addict of cocaine and his swarthy eyes usually burned with a feverish drugged glitter. It was well known that he was

no longer mentally responsible for his acts. He had spent several other terms in prison and once, after having telegraphed to the morning newspaper a thrilling and moving account of his death by violence in another city, he had been sent for a period to the State asylum for the insane.

This was Rufe Mears as John remembered him, and as all of them had seen and known him, and who now stood here before them in the fantastic trappings of a clown of royalty, the visible and supreme embodiment of their unbelievable and extravagant madness. For, like gamblers who will stake a fortune on some moment's whimsy of belief or superstition, thrusting their money in a stranger's hand and bidding him to play with it because the color of his eye is lucky, or as race track men will rub the hump upon a cripple's back to bring them luck, the people of the town now listened prayerfully to every word that Rufus Mears might utter. They greedily sought his opinion in all their staggering speculations and they acted instantly on his suggestion or command. He had become — in what way, for what reason, upon what proof of competence no one knew — the high priest and prophet of this insanity of waste.

They knew that he was witless, that he was criminal, that he was drugged, diseased and broken, but they used him as men once used divining rods, they deferred to him as people in Russia were said to have deferred to idiots in the village — with an ab-

solute and incredible faith that some divine power of intuition in him made all his judgments infallible. It was this creature who now stood before them, on whom already the respectful gaze of the passersby was directed, and to whom Robert now turned with a movement of feverish eagerness, saying to John abruptly and peremptorily as he left him: "Wait a minute . . . I've got to speak to Rufe Mears about something . . . Wait till I come back."

John watched the astounding scene — Rufe Mears, still drawing the gloves off his stained and yellowed fingers with that movement of bored casualness, walked slowly over toward the entrance to the drug store, while Robert, in an attitude of obsequious entreaty, kept at his elbow, bent his tall stiff form toward him, and hoarsely and abruptly poured a torrent of frenzied interrogation of which John could hear glittering fragments: ". . . Property in West Altamont . . . Seventy-five thousand dollars . . . Option expires tomorrow at noon . . . John Ingram has the piece above mine . . . Won't sell . . . Holding for hundred fifty . . . Mine's the best location . . . But Fred Bynum says too far from main road . . . What do you think, Rufe? . . . Is it worth it?"

During the course of this torrential appeal Rufe Mears did not even once turn to look at his petitioner. In fact, he gave no evidence whatever that he was paying the slightest attention to what Robert was saying. Instead,

he finished taking off his gloves, thrust them in his pocket, cast his glittering eye feverishly around in a series of disordered glances, and suddenly grew rigid, shuddered convulsively, and began to root into himself violently with a clutching, thrusting hand. This operation completed, he shuddered once again and, like a man who is just coming out of a trance, seemed for the first time to become aware that Robert was waiting in an attitude of prayerful entreaty.

"What's that? What did you say, Robert," he said rapidly in his dark drugged tone. "How much did they offer you for it? . . . Don't sell . . . Don't sell!" he said suddenly and with violent emphasis. "Now is the time to buy, not to sell . . . The trend is upwards . . . Buy! . . . Buy! . . . Don't take it . . . Don't sell . . . That's my advice!"

"I'm not selling, Rufe," Robert cried excitedly, "I'm thinking of buying."

"Oh yes, yes, yes!" Rufe muttered rapidly. "I see, I see . . ."

He turned abruptly for the first time and fixed his glittering eye upon his questioner. "Where did you say it was?" he demanded sharply. "Rosemont . . . Good . . . Good! . . . Can't go wrong! Buy! Buy!"

Suddenly he started to walk away into the drug store; the lounging idlers split obsequiously. Robert rushed after him frantically, and caught him by the arm, shouting, "No, no, Rufe! It's not Rosemont! It's the other

way . . . I've been telling you . . . It's West Altamont!"

"What's that?" Rufe cried sharply, "West Altamont . . . Why didn't you say so? . . . That's different! Buy! Buy! . . . Can't go wrong! . . . Whole town's moving in that direction . . . Values double out there in six months . . . How much do they want?"

"Seventy-five thousand," Robert panted. "Option expires tomorrow . . . Five years to pay it up . . . The old Buckner place, only fifteen minutes away!"

"Buy! Buy!" Rufe barked, and began to walk away into the store at a lunging and disjointed step, as if his legs would fly away below him at any moment.

Robert turned and strode back toward John, his eyes blazing with excitement, his every stride and gesture a fierce interrogation.

"Did you hear him? Did you hear what he said?" he demanded hoarsely. "You heard him, didn't you? . . . Best damned judge of real estate that ever lived . . . Never known to make a mistake! . . . Buy! Buy! . . . Will double in value in six months . . . You were standing right here?" he said hoarsely and accusingly, glaring at him. "You heard what he said, didn't you?"

"Yes. I heard him."

Robert glanced wildly and confusedly about him, passed his hand feverishly through his hair several times, and then said, sighing heavily and shaking his head in a movement

of astonished wonderment: "Seventy-five thousand dollars' profit in one deal! . . . Never heard anything like it in my life! . . . Lord, Lord!" he cried, "What are we coming to?"

VII

On Sunday afternoon, the mother and her two sons drove out to the only plot of land in town which had been preserved from the furious invasions of the real estate men. This was the cemetery, where all the members of their family who had died were buried.

On the way out, as they drove through the streets of the town, the mother, who was sitting in the back seat of the car, kept up a constant, panoramic, and exhaustive commentary on the speculative history of every piece of property they passed. She talked incessantly about real estate, pausing from time to time to nod deliberately to herself in a movement of strong affirmation, gesturing briefly and casually with her strong wide hand, and meditating her speech frequently with the strong lips of deliberative silence.

"You see, don't you?" she said, nodding slowly to herself with a movement of conviction, and tranquilly indifferent whether they listened or not so long as the puppets of an audience were before her. "You see what they're goin' to do here, don't you? Why, Fred Arthur, Roy McIntyre and Dr. Gibbs — all that crowd — why, yes — here! Say!" she

cried, frowning meditatively. "Wasn't I reading it? Didn't it all come out in the paper — why, here, you know, a week or two ago — how they proposed to tear down that whole block of buildings there and were going to put up the finest garage in this part of the country. Oh! say, it will take up the whole block, you know, with a fine eight-story building over it, with storage space upstairs for more cars, and doctors' offices — why, yes! they're even thinking of puttin' in a roof garden and a big restaurant on top. Say, the whole thing will cost 'em over a half million dollars before they're done with it — oh, paid two thousand dollars a foot for every inch of it!" she cried. "But pshaw! Why, those are Main Street prices — you can get business property up in town for *that!* — I could have told him — but h'm!" — again the scornful little tremor of the head — "He'll never do it — no, sir! He'll be lucky if he gets out with his skin!"

Near the cemetery they passed a place beside the road where an unpaved road of clay went upwards among fields towards some lonely pines. The place beside the road was flanked by two portaled shapes of hewn granite blocks set there like markers of a splendid city yet unbuilt which would rise grandly from the hills that swept back into the green wilderness from the river — this and a large sign planted in the field was all.

But even as they passed by this loneliness of field and pine and waning

light, they read some words upon the sign. The large word on the top was RIVERCREST — and down below they saw in small letters the word “Dedicated.”

“Hah? What say?” she cried out in a sharply startled tone. “What does it say below? Dedicated?”

“Wait a minute!” Lee cried abruptly, jamming his large flat foot into the brake so violently that they were flung forward with a stunning jolt. They halted with a jarring skid, and peered out at the letters on the sign:

RIVERCREST

Dedicated to All the People of This
Section and to the Glory of the
Greater City They Will Build.

They read the words in silence for a moment, and then she repeated them slowly and with obvious satisfaction. “Ah-hah!” she said, nodding her head slowly with deliberate agreement, “that’s just exactly it!” Then they started to move on again.

“Dedicated!” Lee muttered to himself. “Dedicated to all the people of this section” he muttered distractedly, pushing his clumsy fingers through his hair. “To the glory of the Greater City they will build. . . . Uh-huh! Ah-hah!” he sang out madly. “Dedicated! . . . Now ain’t that nice,” he said slowly, and in a tone of mincing and delicate refinement. “Dedicated to the service of all the people of this section.” The crazy grin split wide and sudden on his

handsome face. “*Haw-w!*” he yelled suddenly and smote himself upon the temple with the heel of his large clumsy hand. “Dedicated to cutting your goddamn throat and bleeding you white of every nickel that you’ve got. Dedicated! Haw-w! Whah-whah!”

When they got to the cemetery they drove slowly in around a circling road and at length came to a halt on the rounded crest of the hill where the family burial lot was situated. It was a good lot — perhaps the best one on the hill — and it looked out across the deep dense green of the wooded slopes and hollows towards the central business part of town. The ramparts, spires, and buildings of the town, the old ones as well as the splendid new ones — the hotels, office buildings, garages, and arcades and concrete squares of boom development which exploded from the old design with glittering violence — were plainly visible. It was a fine view.

For a moment, after getting out of the car, the mother stood looking at the burial lot, her strong hands loosely clasped across her waist. Then shaking her head rapidly with a pursed mouth of depreciation and regret, she said: “Hm! Hm! Hm! Too bad, too bad, too bad!”

“What’s that, mama?” Lee said. “What’s too bad?”

“Why, that they should have ever chosen such a place as this for the cemetery,” she said regretfully. “Why, as I told Frank Candler just the other day, they’ve gone and deliberately

given away the two best building sites in town to the niggers and the dead people! That's just exactly what they've done! I've always said as much — that the two finest building sites in town for natural beauty are Nigger-town and Riverview Cemetery. I could have told them that long years ago — they should have known as much themselves if any of them could have seen an inch beyond his nose — that someday the town would grow up and this would be valuable property! Why, why on earth! When they were lookin' for a cemetery site — why on earth didn't they think of findin' one across the river, up there on Patton Hill, say, where you get a beautiful view — out of town somewhere, where property is not so valuable? But *this!*" she cried. "This by rights is *building* property! People could have fine homes here! And as for the niggers, I've always said that they'd have been better off if they were put down there on those old flats in the depot section! Now it's too late, of course, — nothin' can be done — but it was certainly a grave mistake," she said, and shook her head. "I've always known it."

"Well, I guess you're right," Lee muttered absently. "I never thought of it before, but I guess you're right."

"And to think," the mother went on in a moment, with that curious fragmentary semblance of irrelevance which was not irrelevant at all, "—and to think that he would go and move her — to think that any man could be so hardhearted as to

— o-oh!" She shuddered with a brief convulsive pucker of revulsion. "It makes my blood run cold to think of it — and I told him so. I told him so! — to think he would have no more mercy in him than to go and move her from the place where she lay buried."

"Why, who was that, mama?" Lee said absently. "Move who?"

"Why, Lydia, of course, child!" she said impatiently, gesturing briefly to the old and weather-rusted stone beneath which her husband's first wife lay buried. "That's the thing that started all this moving! We'd never have thought of coming here if it hadn't been for Lydia! — And here," she cried fretfully, "the woman had been dead and in her grave more than a year when he gets this notion in his head he's got to move her — and you couldn't reason with him! You couldn't argue with him!" she cried with vehement surprise. "I tried to talk to him about it but it was like talking to a stone wall — no, sir!" Here, with a movement of strong decision, she shook her head. "He'd made up his mind, he was *determined* — and he wouldn't budge from it an inch! . . . 'But see here, man,' I said. 'The thing's not right! — The woman ought to stay where she's buried!' I didn't like the look of it! 'Even the dead have got their rights,' I said —" — again the powerful, short tremor of the face — "'Where the tree falls there let it lie!' — but no! he wouldn't listen, you couldn't talk to him. He says, 'I'll move her if it's the

last thing I ever live to do! I'll move her if I have to dig her up myself and carry the coffin on my back to Riverview — but that's where she's going, and you needn't argue any more!" Well, I saw then that he had his mind made up and that it wouldn't do any good to talk to him about it. But oh! an awful mistake, an *awful* mistake!" she muttered with the powerful short movement of the head — "all that moving and expense for nothing — if he'd felt that way, he should have gone to Riverview in the beginning when she died — but that's when he bought this lot, all right," she now said tranquilly — "And that's the reason that the rest of them are buried here. That's how it was, all right," she said, "but I've always regretted it! I was against it from the start."

And for a moment she was silent, looking with the contemplation of a grave-eyed memory at the weather-rusted stone.

"Well, as I say, then," she went on calmly, "when I saw he had his mind made up, and that there was no use to try to change him — well, I went out to the old cemetery the day they moved her — oh! one of those raw windy days you get in March! The very kind of day she died on. And old Mrs. Wrenn and Amy Williamson — of course, they had both been good friends of Lydia's — they went along, too. And, of course, when we got out there, they were curious, they wanted to have a look, you know," she went on calmly, describing this grisly de-

sire with no surprise whatever, "and they tried to get me to take a look at it, too. 'No,' I said, 'You go on and satisfy your curiosity if that's what you want to do, but I won't look at it!' I said, 'I'd rather remember her the way she was.' Well, they went ahead and did it, then. They got old Prov — you know, he was that old nigger man that worked for us — to open up the coffin, and I turned my back and walked away a little piece until they got through lookin'," she said tranquilly, "and pretty soon, I heard them comin'. Well, I turned around and looked at them, and let me tell you something," she said gravely, "their faces were a study! Oh, they turned pale and they trembled. 'Well, are you satisfied?' I said. 'Did you find what you were lookin' for?' 'Oh-h,' says old Mrs. Wrenn, pale as a ghost, shakin' and wringin' her hands, you know, 'Oh, Delia,' she says, 'it was awful! I'm sorry that I looked,' she said.

"'Ah-hah!' I says, 'What did I tell you? You see, don't you?' Says, 'Oh-h, it was all gone — all gone — all rotted away to nothing so you couldn't recognize her. The face was all gone until you could see the teeth — and the nails had all grown out long — but Delia!' she says, 'the hair! — the hair! — oh, I tell you what,' she says, 'the hair was beautiful! It had grown out until it covered everything — the finest head of hair I ever saw on anyone. But the rest of it — oh! I'm sorry that I looked!' she says. 'Well, I thought so! I thought so!'

I said, 'I knew you'd be sorry, so I wouldn't look!' — But that's the way it was all right," she concluded with the tranquil satisfaction of omniscience.

VIII

At one corner of the burial lot a tall locust tree was growing: its pleasant shade was divided between the family lot and the adjacent one where members of the mother's family, the Pentlands, had been buried. The grave-stones in the family lot (which was set on a gentle slope) were arranged in two parallel rows. In the first row were buried John's brothers, Arthur McFarlane Hawke and Edward Madison Hawke, who were twins: also his mother's first child, Margaret Ann.

Facing these was the family monument. It was a square massive chunk of gray metallic granite, brilliantly burnished, one of the finest and most imposing monuments in the cemetery. It bore the family name in raised letters upon its shining surface, and on each end were inscriptions for his father and his mother. His father was buried at the end of the monument which faced the town. His inscription read: "William Oliver Hawke — Born near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, April 16, 1851 — Died, Altamont, Old Catawba, June 21, 1922."

The mother's inscription was at the other end of the monument, facing her own people, and read: "Delia Elizabeth Hawke — née Pentland — Born at the Forks of Ivy, Old Ca-

tawba, February 16, 1860 — Died —."

All of the monuments, save his father's and mother's, had in addition to the name and birth and death inscriptions, a little elegiac poem, carved in a fine italicized script, and reading somewhat as follows:

Still is the voice we knew so well
Vanished the face we love
Flown his spirit pure to dwell
With angels up above.
Ours is the sorrow, ours the pain
And ours the joy alone
To clasp him in our arms again
In heaven by God's throne.

In the drowsy waning light of the late afternoon, John could see people moving slowly across the great hill of the dead, among the graves and monuments of other burial lots. The place had the brooding hush a cemetery has on a summer day, and in the fading light even the figures of the people had a dream-like and almost phantasmal quality as they moved about.

The mother stood surveying the scene reflectively, her hands held at the waist in their loose strong clasp. She looked at the grave-stones in the family lot, reading the little elegiac verses, and although she had read these banal phrases a thousand times, she did so again with immense satisfaction, framing the words with her lips and then nodding her head slowly and deliberately in a movement of emphatic affirmation, as if to say: "Ah-hah! That's it exactly!"

For a moment longer, she stood looking at the stones. Then she went over to Ed's grave, picked up a wreath

of laurel leaves which someone had left there a few weeks before, and which had already grown withered and faded looking, and set it at the head of the grave against the base of the stone. Then, she moved about among the graves, bending with a blunt, strong movement and weeding out tufts of the coarse grass which had grown weedily about the bases of some of the monuments.

When she had finished, she stood looking down at Margaret's stone which was weathered, stained and rusty looking. She read the inscription of the old faded letters, and then turning to her youngest son, spoke quietly:

"This morning at eight o'clock, thirty-nine years ago, I lost the first child that I ever had. Your sister Margaret died today — July the fourteenth — four days less than nine months old. She was the most perfect baby I ever saw — the brightest and most sensible child for her age." And again she nodded her head slowly and deliberately, in a movement of powerful affirmation.

"Time went on, I had the other children, kept my hands full, and to a certain degree," she said reflectively, "kept my mind off sorrow. No time for sorrow!" cried the mother, with the strong convulsive tremor of the head. "Too much to do for sorrow! . . . Then, when years had passed, the hardest blow of all fell. Arthur was taken. It seemed I had given up all. Could have borne as well if all the others had been taken! I can't under-

stand why!" And for a moment her brown worn eyes were wet. "But it had grown a part of me — felt somehow that he was to lead the others, and when I realized that he was gone, it seemed that everything was lost.

"I never got to know Ed," she said quietly. "I always wanted to talk to him, but could not. I felt a part of him was gone — maybe he felt so, too. It was hard to give Ed up, but I had suffered the first great loss in giving up his twin, the other part."

She paused, looking down at the two tombstones for a moment, and then said gravely and proudly: "I believe that they have joined each other and if they are happy I'll be reconciled. I believe I'll meet them in a Higher Sphere, along with all the members of our family — all happy, and all leading a new life."

She was silent for another moment, and then, with a movement of strong decision, she turned away and looked out towards the town where already the evening lights were going on, were burning hard and bright and steady in the dusk.

"Come now, my sonny boys!" she cried briskly and cheerfully, "It's getting dark and there are people waiting for us.

"Son," she said, laying her broad hand on John's shoulder in a warm, strong and easy gesture, and speaking in the old half-bantering manner that she had used so often when he was a child, "I've been a long time livin' on this earth and, as the fellow says, the world do move! You've got your

life ahead of you, and lots to learn and many things to do — but let me tell you something, boy!” and for a moment she looked at him in a sudden, straight and deadly fashion, with a faint smile round the edges of her mouth. “Go out and see the world, and get your fill of wanderin’, and then,” she cried, “come back and tell me if you’ve found a better place than home! I’ve seen great changes in my time, and I’ll see many more before I die, and there are great things yet in store for us — great progress, great inventions, it will all come true. Perhaps I’ll not live to see it, but you *will!* We’ve got a fine town here and we’ve fine people here to make it go — and we’re not done yet. I’ve seen it all grow up out of a country village — and some day we will have a great city here.”

IX

A great city? These words, he knew, had come straight from his mother’s heart, from all the invincible faith of her brave spirit which had endured the anguish, grief and suffering of a hundred lives and which would never change. That unshaken spirit would, he knew, face towards the future to the last hour of its life with this same unyielding confidence, and would be triumphant over all the ruinous error and mischance of life. And for her, he knew, this “great city” that she spoke of now was the city of her heart, her faith, her spirit — the city of the everlasting future, and her quenchless

hope, the fortunate, good and happy life that some day, she was sure, would be found here on the earth for all men living.

But of that other city, this glittering and explosive shape of man’s destructive fury which now stood sharply in their vision in the evening light — what did the future hold for that place and its people? In this strange and savage hunger for what they had spoken of as a better life, a greater city, in this delirium of intoxication which drove them on, there was really a fatal and desperate quality, as if what they hungered for was ruin and death. It seemed to him that they were ruined: it seemed that even when they laughed and shouted and smote one another on the back, the knowledge of their ruin was in them — and they did not care, they were drunk and mad and amorous of death.

But under all their flash and play of life, the paucity of their designs — the starved meagerness of their lives — was already apparent to them. The better life resolved itself into a few sterile and baffled gestures — they built an ugly and expensive house and bought a car and joined a country club; they built a larger, uglier and more expensive house, a more expensive car and joined a larger and more expensive country club — they pursued this routine through all the repetitions of an idiot monotony, building new houses, new streets, new country clubs with a frenzied haste, a wild extravagance, but nowhere

was there food to feed their hunger, drink to assuage their thirst. They were stricken and lost, starved squirrels chasing furiously the treadmill of a revolving cage, and they saw it, and they knew it.

A wave of ruinous and destructive energy had welled up in them — they had squandered fabulous sums in meaningless streets and bridges, they had torn down the ancient public buildings, court house and city hall, and erected new ones, fifteen stories tall and large enough to fill the needs of a city of a million people; they had leveled hills and bored through mountains, building magnificent tunnels paved with double roadways and glittering with shining tiles — tunnels which leaped out on the other side into Arcadian wilderness. It was mad, infuriate, ruinous; they had flung away the earnings of a lifetime and mortgaged those of a generation to come; they had ruined themselves, their children, and their city, and nothing could be done to stop them.

Already the town had passed from their possession, they no longer owned it, it was mortgaged under a debt of fifty million dollars, owned by bonding companies in the North. The very streets they walked on had been sold beneath their feet — and still they bought, bought, bought, signing their names to papers calling for the payment of a king's ransom for forty feet of earth, reselling the next day to other mad men who signed away their lives with the same careless

magnificence. On paper, their profits were fabulous, but their "boom" was already over and they would not see it. They were staggering below obligations to pay that none of them could meet — and still they bought.

And then, when it seemed that they had exhausted all the possibilities of ruin and extravagance in town, they had rushed out into the wilderness, into the calm eternity of the hills, into lyrical immensities of wild earth where there was land enough for all men living, where any man could take as much earth as he needed, and they had madly staked off little plots and wedges of the wilderness, as one might try to stake a picket fence out in the middle of the ocean. They had given fancy names to all their plots and stakings — "Wild Boulders" — "Shady Acres" — "Eagle's Crest." They set prices to an acre of the wilderness that might have bought a mountain, and made charts and drawings, showing populous and glittering communities of shops, houses, streets, roads and clubs in regions where there was no road, no street, no house, and which could not be reached in any way save by a group of resolute and desperate pioneers armed with axes, or by an airplane.

These places were to be transformed into idyllic colonies for artists and critics and writers — all the artists and critics and writers in the nation — and there were colonies as well for preachers, doctors, actors, dancers, golf-players, and retired locomotive engineers. There were colonies for

everyone, and what is more, they sold them!

It was the month of July, 1929 — that fatal year which brought ruin to millions of people all over the country. They were now drunk with an imagined victory, pressing and shouting in the dusty tumult of the battle, most beaten where they thought their triumph was the greatest, so that the desolate and barren panorama of their ruin would not be clearly known to them for several years to come.

X

And now, as John stood there looking at this new strange town, this incredible explosion of a town which had gone mad and frenzied overnight, he suddenly remembered the barren nighttime streets of the town he had known so well in his childhood. The gaunt pattern of their dreary and unpeopled desolation had burned its acid print upon his memory. Bare, wintry and deserted — by ten o'clock at night those streets had been an aching monotony and weariness of hard lights and empty pavements, a frozen torpor broken only occasionally by the footfalls of some prowler of the night, by desperate, famished lonely men who hoped past hope and past belief for some haven of comfort, warmth and love there in the wilderness, for the sudden opening of a magic door into some secret, rich and more exultant life. They never found it. They were dying in the darkness and they knew it — without a

goal, a wall, a certain purpose or a door.

For that was the way the thing had come. That was the way the thing had happened. Yes, it was there — on many a night long past and wearily accomplished, in ten thousand little towns and in ten million barren streets where all the passion, hope and hunger of the famished men beat like a great pulse through the fields of night — it was there and nowhere else that all this madness had been brewed.

And yet, what really had been changed in life? Below their feet, the earth was still and everlasting as it had always been. And around them in the cemetery the air brooded with a lazy drowsy warmth. There was the cry of the sweet-singing birds again, the sudden thrumming bullet noises in undergrowth and leaf, and the sharp cricketing stitch of afternoon, the broken lazy sounds from far away, a voice in the wind, a boy's shout, a cry, the sound of a bell, as well as all the drowsy fragrance of a thousand warm intoxicating odors — the resinous smell of pine, and the smells of grass and warm sweet clover. It was all as it had always been, but the town where he had spent his childhood and which lay stretched out before him in the evening light had changed past recognition: the town with its quiet streets and the old frame houses which were almost obscured below the massed leafy spread of trees, was now scarred with hard raw patches of bright concrete on which the sun fell wearily, or with

raw clumps and growths of new construction — skyscrapers, garages, hotels, glittering residential atrocities.

The place looked like a battlefield; it was cratered and shelltorn with savage explosions of brick and concrete all over town. And in the interspaces the embowered remnants of the old and pleasant town remained, timid, retreating, overwhelmed, to remind one in all this harsh new din, of footfalls in a quiet street as men went home at noon, of laughter and quiet voices and the leafy rustle of the night. For this was lost!

This image of his loss, and theirs, had passed through his mind with the speed of light, the instancy of thought, and now he heard his mother's voice:

"And you'll come back!" he heard her saying. "There's no better or more beautiful place on earth than in these mountains, boy — and some day you'll come back again," she cried with invincible faith.

An old and tragic light was shining faintly on the incredible, time-enchanted hills. It was shining like the light of dreams on the rocky little river which he had seen somewhere, somehow, from the windows of a train long, long ago, in his childhood, somewhere before memory began, and which had wound its deathless magic in his heart forever. And that old and tragic light of fading day shone faintly on their faces, and suddenly they were fixed there like a prophecy with the hills and river all around them — and there was something lost, intolerable, foretold and come to pass

— some magic that he could not say.

Down by the river's edge in darkness now he heard the bell, the whistle and the pounding wheel. It brought to him, as it had done ten thousand times in childhood, its promise of morning, new lands, and a shining city.

And now, receding, far and faint, he heard again the whistle of the great train pounding on the rails across the river. It swept away from them, leaving the lost and lonely thunder of its echoes in the hills, the flame-flare of its terrific furnace for a moment, and then just heavy wheels and rumbling loaded cars — and, finally, nothing.

Now, even farther off and almost lost, he heard for the last time its wailing and receding cry, bringing to him again all its wild and secret prophecy, its pain of going, and its triumphant promise of new lands. He saw them fixed forever in his vision, and the lonely light was shining on their faces, and he felt an intolerable pain, an unutterable joy and triumph as he knew that he would leave them. And something in his heart was saying like a demon's whisper of unbodied joy that spoke of flight and darkness, new earth he could touch and make his own again: Soon! Soon! Soon!

Then they all got into the car again and drove rapidly away from the great hill of the dead, the woman toward the certitude of lights, the people and the town; the young man toward the train, the city, and the voyages — all of the gold-bright waters of the morning, the seas, the harbors, and the magic of the ships.

LET US ABANDON FUNERALS

By ROY A. BURKHART

I SHALL never forget the funeral they held when my brother died. We went to the country church. The minister preached an hour and a half. He seemed to make a deliberate effort to make us cry. It was barbarous; it was terrible. It haunted me as a boy. I think one of the motives for my entry in the ministry may have been to try to put an end to that sort of thing. After that long service, after all the people had filed past, after much crying and screaming, we finally made our way to the cemetery and I shall always remember the tones of that minister. He implied by all he said that we were actually putting my brother down into a hole in the ground. And again and again I thought of the horror of putting him there, and night after night when I was in my bed I thought of him as being there in that cemetery with other ghosts. It was morbid; it was sickening; it was frightening and it gave death an awful and horrible meaning.

In eleven years as minister of a

church, I have come to the conviction that we should completely abandon the funeral. That does not mean we would not have some kind of service. It does not mean at all that we would forget the event, shrugging our shoulders. No! Let me tell a story which may illustrate what I mean by calling for an end to funerals.

I was summoned from a meeting the other day with the word that one of my men had died suddenly of a heart attack. He was just thirty-seven years old. I was told the children were calling for me. They could not find the mother. She was downtown shopping, for she and her husband were planning a vacation in Florida. He had not been well for some time. I hastened to the home and stayed with the children for a time. Finally the hospital called urging that someone come to sign a release for the body so it might be sent to the mortician. The son in the family and I started downtown. On the way we happened to meet the mother on her way home.

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As gently as possible I broke the news to her. Incidentally, she was amazingly sustained, reacting with great courage. She joined us, signed the release at the hospital, and then accompanied us to the mortician's place.

When we selected the casket, I said to her, "Remember now that Bob is not to be put into that box and when we go to the cemetery, we are not taking him — we are taking the abandoned house in which he lived. Let us not throw away a lot of money. It is foolish." Some of the caskets were as much as a thousand dollars, but with great wisdom she selected one that was \$285, including all of the costs of the mortician's service.

When all of the plans had been made and we were driving home, she, of course, was crushed, wounded and bruised. I said little, but now and then we did talk about plans. Sometime before I had preached a sermon on this very idea of abandoning the funeral, holding instead a small meeting of close friends. Bob liked that, and so did his wife.

II

When the day came for the service, the family gathered outside of the sanctuary. We stood together in silence for a little bit. Very quietly I told them, "We are not going in there in weakness, but in strength; not to be morbid, but to be victorious; not to a funeral service, but to an intimate meeting of the family with its close and loving friends." I further pointed

out that we wanted to share in such a way as to reveal his manhood, his courage, his strength and his faith. After a short prayer, the family entered the sanctuary, but the casket was outside in the hearse. There were just a few flowers there. The sanctuary was filled with friends. I walked into the chancel and began a quiet, personal service. We started with a prayer something like this:

Our Father, be with us as we here discover friendship at its highest and at its best; when we come to know something of the power of human fellowship, where the spirit of Christ and the comfort of God is known. Bless us as together we commemorate the triumphal entry of Robert into immortality.

This was followed by some well-known scripture readings, after which I spoke for a while, emphasizing their meanings for the occasion. We pointed out, for example, that while we read in the 121st Psalm that God is thy keeper, it did not mean God was the keeper of the body. Although God has provided all of the stuff for the body's creation and its growth, its nurture, even for its healing and to an amazing degree for its protection, in the final analysis each of us is the keeper of his or her body and, in a great sense, the keeper of the bodies of others. But God keeps the soul. Together we found a great deal of evidence for that faith, and the meaning of it grew as we were there together.

Then I made the point that, after all, the test of a real man is not how

long he lives, but how much; not how much money he has made, but how much did he love, how loyal was he, how true, how devoted, how genuine, how courageous, how great was his faith.

I said further that when we go to this cemetery we are not taking him there; instead we are taking the abandoned house in which he lived. We are no more our bodies than light is the windowpane or a shadow is the tree, or a family is the house.

Then we shared together the realization that we had discovered an amazing fellowship in this simple meeting; that we, instead of being morbid and sad, had found a spirit of inspiration, of triumph, and of victory; and that we had sensed a presence that we could not see, but that was very real to us. Then after the closing prayer and benediction we went out from that sanctuary — no one defeated, no one morbid, but each one with a sense of the power of human friendship and the comfort that can come from God to human beings who are devoted and sincere and true. We went out from that service feeling that together we had commemorated the triumphal entry into immortality of Robert, real as a man, a husband, and a father.

III

If I had my way, of course, there would be cremation and the ashes might be scattered over the city or buried perhaps in the garden. In this

particular case the young wife felt she wanted to bury the body in the family plot. I think it would have been much better if we could have put the body in the cemetery first, then returning to the sanctuary for the service of commemoration.

At any rate, after the service we went to the cemetery and gave back Robert's abandoned house to the good earth. As we stood in the open field with a river nearby and in sight of the university which he had attended and the city he had loved, I said simple things like these:

"Let us remember again that we are returning the house in which he lived, but which he now has abandoned. We are told by the physicist that the very elements that make up this body are immortal. That there is nothing dying in the universe. The body will change its form, but the elements which compose it are like the elements in the light that comes from a distant star and will never die. We know that the universe conserves all energy. That is why we believe that the universe will not reverse itself and destroy the highest of all energy — which is the soul. So we now return this body to the good earth, but it is our faith that his spirit lives in fellowship with God eternally and that he is in our hearts and in our fellowship this very moment and that he will go on fulfilling his life through his wife and through his children and through some of the men who stand here this very moment.

"And may I add a few other words,"

I continued. "Friendship is a wonderful thing at a time like this, but it will also be wonderful six weeks from now, and six months from now and twelve months from now. Let the miracle of it flow from us to this family so they shall never know a loneliness that is too great.

"And may we never think of this place when we think of him. For if he could speak to us, he would say something like this, 'Do not look for me in a cemetery, but wherever someone stands looking up at the sky, loving the clouds, there I will be. Wherever a man plays golf in an open field, there I will be. Wherever a man and woman join together in love to build a home and love their children and help them grow up so they will become the sons and daughters of God, there I will be. Wherever men and women find the stuff of courage and faith, there I will be. Wherever an

employer learns how to work with his employees so they have a sense of fellowship and a sense of love for each other, there I will be. Wherever men find a faith that is greater than life and the stuff of courage and the joy of living and the faith in life eternal, there I will be. These have been a part of my life. These I have loved and believed in. These are my life.'"

And then we had the benediction and very quietly dispersed. No one felt defeated, no one felt morbid. In fact, many of the men later told me, "It was a shocking thing to have him go like that, but somehow or other the service was an inspiration and it made me want to live better."

And when it was all over, I felt that in his case we had abandoned the funeral and in Robert's name we found a fellowship and a friendship and a quality of life that none of us had ever known before.

SNOW IN NEW YORK

BY HOWARD GRIFFIN

WE paused by the curb, I remember,
When the air turned cold,
And the sky burned brown like an ember
And the lamps shone gold —

How lovely, how distant and strange,
I could watch that forever, you said;
The frost glistened bright on your smile
And the fur cap winked on your head.

THE LIBRARY

China's Fate

BY BERTRAM D. WOLFE

BOOKS on China have a way of flowing in two divergent channels that have no point of contact with each other. On the one hand, there are the works of scholars — dependable, illuminating, and little read except by specialists; on the other hand, we have books by reporters and special pleaders — brash and arrogant, misleading, but popular in form and intended for wide distribution. The latest example of the former is the new edition of Kenneth Scott Latourette's already classic *The Chinese, Their History and Culture*,¹ and of the latter, *Thunder out of China*, by Theodore H. White and Annalee Jacoby, which is a Book-of-the-Month Club selection.²

Like most of the books of the second type, the new White-Jacoby work bears certain telltale stigmata: to wit, the Communists are "not really Communists" but "agrarian democrats"; they have no connection

with Moscow but make their own line; the ousting of the Japanese is made to seem all important to the integrity and independence of China, but not the ousting of the Russians; American troops should be withdrawn from Manchuria, but the Russian troops can stay in Port Arthur and Dairen for the ninety-nine years of their leasehold and the authors will do their demure best not to notice it.

A more serious difference between the two types of book is that the scholarly work is likely to recognize the Chinese Revolution as an attempt to transform China in terms of its own heritage, while the journalist's report ignores China's past and right to a development of her own, and treats the Chinese Revolution either as an obligation to "catch up" with Western civilization and Western institutions, or as an unduly slow and belated replica of the Russian Revolution. Formulas and prejudices and prescriptions are laid down for 400,000,000 people without so much as a

¹ \$7.00. Macmillan.

² \$3.00. William Sloane.

BERTRAM D. WOLFE came to know personally a number of the Russian and Chinese Communist Party leaders referred to in this article during his visits to Moscow in the years 1924, 1928 and 1929. He is at present writing a triple biography of Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin.

hint that theirs is the largest body of mankind under one civilization in the world, a civilization that counts its years in millenniums of continuity whereas we or the Russians count in mere centuries. Neither humility nor knowledge is there to prompt the authors to ask what it is that China can and should — and doubtless will — preserve of its ancient heritage. Or what it can teach the West, whose physical and spiritual eruption into this mighty land has started it on one of the cruelest and most grandiose processes of transformation in the whole history of man.

Here is a people that traces the outlines of its present culture back beyond the second millennium before Christ; that in comparative homogeneity of blood and language and outlook and government has organized a larger number of human beings for a longer period than any nation in Europe, or all of them together, or than India, or Egypt, or America. The Chinese invented the art of writing while Rome was a barbarian village. They invented paper, printing, the compass, gunpowder (with the quaint notion that its highest use was in celebrating festivals!), while Western Europe, which was to make such startling and disturbing use of these inventions, was made up of nomadic tribes ranging the forests. They developed a great network of canals dug by the state (such as Peter the Great was to initiate in the eighteenth century and Stalin in the twentieth), somewhere in the dim past of the

Han dynasty before the Christian era, and lesser canals and irrigation and flood control works even earlier.

The Chinese discovered the laws of soil conservation, irrigation and intensive agriculture, and printed treatises thereon, a thousand years before the Germanic tribes learned to domesticate plants and animals. Even today, lacking our tools and science, a Chinese peasant gets a larger yield out of an acre of land than an American farmer, not to speak of a Russian *muzhik*. Contrary to the deluge of reports by our writers, which speak of “feudalism” and the need of “breaking up large estates” in China, there are almost no such estates in the Western sense of the term or in feudal dimensions. The Chinese abolished feudalism and hereditary aristocracy before the West had even devised those institutions. Some time before the third century B.C., they began to substitute for rule by hereditary lords a system of administration by a scholarly civil service based upon competitive examination and recruitment of the ablest, regardless of birth or status.

The chief agrarian problems of this overwhelmingly peasant land lie in the very success of this reform, which abolished feudal tenure and primogeniture and caused the land to be endlessly divided and subdivided. Not large estates, but little pocket-handkerchief farms too small to sustain a population which is denser in many rural areas than in the thickly populated cities of other lands — that is the basic agrarian problem of China.

Statistics vary from region to region, as does fertility, but more than 50 per cent of the farmers own their own land (even in our wealthy Iowa, more than 50 per cent are tenants), and the average size of a farm is estimated as four to five acres, which means that some large families have mere vegetable gardens of less than an acre to live on.

The area of China is approximately the same as that of the United States or the continent of Europe, including Russia; yet it has sheltered and supported (very badly, to be sure, during this recent fearful cycle of wars, invasions, civil wars and social transformation) a population nearly four times that of the United States, or approximately the same as that of all the busy countries of Europe put together. In that pressure of population on resources; in the eruption of the Western powers into China with the aid of superior material force; in the further weakening occasioned by civil war; in the need for industrialization and the acquisition of the military and mechanical aspects of the invading civilization in order to oust the invaders and restore China's dignity and independence — here lie the real problems of the Revolution. But no one of these makes it desirable for China to reject wholesale her remarkable ancient heritage — to throw out, as the saying goes, the baby along with the bathwater.

The very age of Chinese civilization, its early superiority and high achievements have tended to delay

and slow up the rate of change, and now make change more difficult, more necessary, and more sweeping and unsettling. Dr. Sun first became aware of the need of revolutionizing China when he saw the French slicing off its south lands, the Russians and the Japanese contending in the north over Manchuria, Mongolia, Korea and the Liaotang Peninsula (Port Arthur), and England and Germany cutting spheres from its central coastline. "The rest of mankind is the carving knife and the serving dish, while we are the fish and the meat," he cried in anguish. "We have the greatest population and the oldest culture. . . . But we have only familyism and clanism; there is no real nationalism. In spite of four hundred million people we are but a sheet of loose sand."

"Nationalism, Democracy, People's Livelihood" — these were Dr. Sun's famous "Three Principles of the People."³ The first two were to give the people the same stake in the fate of the nation as they had in that of the clan and the family and the village. And as for "People's Livelihood," it was the old Confucian formula as to the true purpose of government, but it needed a new implementation through modern industry, enlarged productivity, improved transportation, and new methods of increasing and distributing wealth in a country in which "there are not

³ *San Min Chu I*. (The Three Principles of the People.) Last Lectures by Dr. Sun Yat-sen. Translated into English by Frank W. Price. Ministry of Information of the Republic of China.

rich and poor; only poor and less poor."

"The purpose of my Three Principles," said Dr. Sun in lectures delivered while cancer was eating at his liver and he knew his time was running out, "is to elevate China to an equal position among the nations, so that she can permanently exist in the world."

While this attempt to save and transform a great nation is going on, the least that can be expected of allegedly sympathetic, or even reasonably informed and moderately humble reporters, is to recognize, along with the scholar Kenneth Scott Latourette, that "the Chinese culture whose disruption the present generation has witnessed, and the civilization of the West which brought about the revolution . . . are *both* notable achievements of the human genius, and it would be difficult to decide which is the more admirable."

And to recognize further, with the same author, that whatever its difficulties in meeting the needs of a modern industrialized and centralized state, "China's political structure has endured longer than any other ever devised by man, and, measured by the area and the number of people governed, was one of the most successful in history."

II

When the historian of the future looks back upon our epoch, the men who may well loom largest are three

born within a half decade of each other: Lenin (1870); Gandhi (1869); and Sun Yat-sen (1866). Despite profound differences, these three will together be seen to have led one of the greatest movements in recorded history: the reawakening of the East. For thousands of years before Christ, China, India, and other empires of the nearer East were far ahead of the Western World. For a brief period in the tenth and eleventh centuries A.D., Russia, too (not the recent Russia centering around Moscow, but the older Ukrainian Russia centering around Kiev and deriving its civilization from Baghdad and Byzantium), was ahead of northwestern Europe. But thereafter, for three-quarters of a millennium, the current of historical dynamism shifted to the Atlantic seaboard, thence overseas to America, and ever westward until it had circled the globe and reawakened the slumbering East.

It was at this moment that the three were born who were destined to lead the great Eurasian plain of Russia with its over 150,000,000 people; the subcontinent of India with its 350,000,000; and the subcontinent of China with its 400 or 450,000,000.

It is impossible for a contemporary to give final judgment on the comparative greatness of these three. Will it correspond to the moral energies they released? Then the order of precedence may be: Gandhi, Sun, Lenin. The numbers they set in motion? That would make it Sun, Gandhi, Lenin. The power concen-

tration they built up within their own lifetime? That would put Lenin in first place.

Coming as I did to a recent book on the life of Sun Yat-sen⁴ after prolonged preoccupation with the life of Lenin, I was struck by their differing approaches to the question of power as a key to the profound differences in rationale, in temperament and in "style" between the two men.

After being aroused by the slicing off of a piece of China by France in 1885 and after declaring war on the degenerate Manchu dynasty in 1895 for not being able to resist further encroachment by Japan and Russia, Dr. Sun engaged in no less than eleven fruitless insurrections before that of 1911 enabled him — to use Lenin's words — "to take power." Then his first proclamation to the people ended with words Lenin could never have uttered: "I, Sun Wen [a variant name of Sun Yat-sen], solemnly declare that I will resign as soon as these things have been accomplished." And resign he did, much sooner than he had promised. Within a month in fact, he had ceded the presidency to another because he thought it would prevent needless bloodshed.

A fool? The tragic decade and a half that remained to him almost made it seem that that surrender of power had negated his lifetime of effort. Local warlords sprang up; would-be emperors; *coups d'état*; attempted restorations. More than once

he fled the country and returned to start fresh uprisings. In 1921, elected president once more, his actual sovereignty was soon reduced to the deck of a single battleship and the command of two hundred sailors under his young chief of staff, Chiang Kai-shek. Yet that renunciation of power, that scrupulous attention to means employed, that touch of "Chinese style," had won him such prestige that his opponents, with guns trained upon his battleship, found it necessary to parley and offer life in return for the legal sanction that would come from his resignation. He answered:

In the age of tyrants, emperors could die for their country. Shall not presidents be allowed to die for their republic? . . . Only if the rebels are severely grief-stricken, shall I open negotiations with them.

In the end they were "grief-stricken" and the influence of Dr. Sun grew, so that at his death in 1925 his armies were already gathering under Chiang Kai-shek for the long-dreamed-of sweep to the north (1926–28) which was to lay the foundations for a united China and begin the expulsion of the invaders and their puppets, and the subjection of the local warlords.

Refusal to treat with rebels until they are "severely grief-stricken" cannot be dismissed as a mere idiosyncrasy of Dr. Sun's. That there is something profoundly Chinese about it was demonstrated afresh in 1936, when his successor, Chiang Kai-shek,

⁴ *Sun Yat-sen, A Portrait*, by Stephen Chen and Robert Payne. \$3.00. John Day.

finding himself kidnapped by one of his subordinates, the young Manchurian warlord, Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang, refused to treat with his captor, demanding that the latter either slay him, or repent and sue for pardon. In the end, the young marshal humbly followed his late captive to Nanking to ask for punishment at his hands. From the "face" or prestige which Chiang won as a result of his conduct in that episode, no less than from his victories in the famous March to the North of 1926-28, came the authority which enabled him to unite all China, including hostile warlords and hostile Communists, in the eight terrible years when China had to suffer more and fight longer than any other country engaged in the late World War.

III

With the names of Gandhi, Lenin and Sun, three other names are intimately associated. Only time can answer fully the question: to what extent do Nehru, Stalin and Chiang Kai-shek represent continuity, to what extent departure from the aims and ideals of their respective "masters"? Though the evidence is not all in, it is already possible to say that Chiang is much closer to Dr. Sun than Stalin to Lenin; perhaps, too, than the socialistic and pro-industrialization Nehru is to the Gandhi who wished to exclude modern machinery from India. One has only to compare Chiang Kai-shek's wartime

speeches⁵ with Stalin's⁶ to see how much further the latter has departed from the outlook of his predecessor than Chiang from Sun Yat-sen's. Chiang's speeches, like Dr. Sun's, are grave and sententious, permeated by the ancient Chinese virtues of propriety, justice, loyalty and conscientiousness, quietly hopeful in the midst of apparent hopelessness, always concerned with the defense of Chinese integrity not only against the invader of the moment but against all invaders, and with resistance as but one phase of reconstruction. There is in them no single utterance which would have stuck in Dr. Sun's throat, as innumerable utterances of Stalin during the war would have choked Lenin. Certainly we cannot imagine the Chiang of these speeches addressing any words to the ruler of Japan such as Stalin did to the Nazi leaders during the period of the pact with Hitler for the partition of Poland: "The friendship of the peoples of Germany and the Soviet Union, cemented in blood, will long endure." (Telegram from Stalin to von Ribbentrop on Stalin's birthday. The "blood," of course, was Polish blood.)

The historian of the future could determine the extent of Stalin's rupture with the early anti-imperialism of Lenin by comparing Lenin's words on the Far East in 1904-05 and in 1917 with Stalin's words and deeds in present-day China. Thus, when the

⁵ *The Collected Wartime Messages of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, 1937-45.* \$7.50. John Day.

⁶ *The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, by Joseph Stalin. \$1.75. International Publishers.

Tsar lost Port Arthur in the War of 1904-05, Lenin wrote an article beginning: "The proletariat has every reason to rejoice. . . ." How strange this sounds placed alongside Marshal Stalin's "Victory Address" of September 2, 1945, when Manchuria again fell into the Russian sphere, along with Northern Korea, Dairen and Port Arthur:

The defeat of the Russian troops in 1904 left grave memories in the minds of our peoples. It was a dark stain on our country. Our people trusted and waited for the day when Japan would be routed and the stain wiped away. For forty years have we, men of the older generation, waited for this day. . . .

Or the historian could compare Marshal Stalin's actions in Persia, Turkey, East Prussia and China with the bitter attack of Lenin on the Kerensky government in July 1917, because it had not repudiated the Tsarist claims "or even published the secret treaties of a frankly predatory nature, concerning the partitioning of Persia, the robbery of China, of Turkey, the annexation of East Prussia. . . ."

Indeed, the true metal of many a more subtle book than that of White and Jacoby is revealed by the simple acid test of an author's attitude towards the Tsar's seizure and Stalin's reseizure of Port Arthur. Here, for instance, is Foster Rhea Dulles' account of the two events.⁷ The original act:

Russia exacted leaseholds at Port Arthur

and Talienwan, the very territory from which she had warned Japan three years earlier, as part of her program to make Manchuria a Russian sphere of influence.

And the reassertion of the Tsar's claim by Stalin:

The concessions China had made were important and far-reaching. They did not, however, involve the sacrifice of sovereignty, which had characterized those exacted by Tsarist Russia. The treaty as a whole was a further guarantee of China's political and territorial integrity.

We wonder how Mr. Dulles would like to test that theory of Chinese sovereignty by trying to fly in a Chinese government plane over the guns of the fortress of Port Arthur!

The White-Jacoby book employs a cruder form of double standard: it explains away all the virtues of the Central government that have to be admitted, and explains away all the deficiencies and vices of the Communists which cannot be ignored. However, the trusting reader does not have to wait for these curious exercises in apologetics in order to know whom to applaud and whom to hiss. As in the stock-company melodrama the villain is known by his oily black moustache and the hero by his honest, blond, smooth-shaven features, so the authors give you a key as they introduce each character: "A slim, cold-eyed Chekiang youth named Chiang Kai-shek"; "his brittle wife, Mrs. Chiang"; "a gimlet-eyed character called Chiang Ting-weng." And on the other side: "Mao Tse-tung, a round, unlined, curiously serene face, more vivid and more given to broad smiles

⁷ *China and America, The Story of Their Relations Since 1784*. \$2.75. Princeton.

than the disciplined countenance of Chiang Kai-shek"; "Huang Chen, the ruddy-faced, hardy defender of the North"; "the handsome, dark-eyed insurrectionary of the North, General Chou En-lai."

One is never in doubt for a moment, unless one doubts the integrity of authors who would use such devices on their readers.

IV

Are the Chinese Communists really Communists or something else? Do they have an organic tie-up with Russia? Do they practice terror and one-party dictatorship where they rule? Are they a Russian fifth column for the disintegration of China? When they call for the withdrawal of American troops, who are temporary and want no territory in China, do they also call for the withdrawal of Russian troops, who are permanent (ninety-nine years) and have taken territory? These are the questions which books of the White-Jacoby type neither clearly ask nor honestly answer.

The Chinese Communist Party was originally organized by Russian agents with Russian money (Vytinsky, Litnovsky, Malin, Borodin and others). After its formation in 1921, Moscow allotted it a monthly subsidy of \$12,000 American. It joined the Kuomintang on Russian orders, split the Kuomintang in two on Russian orders, withdrew from both sections on Russian orders, attempted insurrections in Shanghai and Canton under

the direct leadership of Russian and other Comintern agents. Thus the Canton uprising of 1928 was directed by the Russian (Georgian) Lominadze, the German Heinz Neumann, and the onetime Hungarian Minister of War Pogany (pseudonym: John Pepper). The military command of the insurrection was in the hands of a Russian officer, Vytinsky.

The Sixth Congress of the Chinese Party (in 1928, the last time that this "democratic" party ever held a congress) was actually held in Moscow. Stalin personally decided the main questions. It was always in Moscow that its leaders were selected, trained, removed, purged. Chen Tu-hsiu, its leader until 1928, was also a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. Li Li-san was his chief assistant. Both were removed on Stalin's order in 1928, and replaced by the present leader, Mao Tse-tung. Chen was expelled and Li Li-san was kept in exile in Moscow for over fifteen years. All of the Party's leaders have been, and still are, commuters between Moscow and China. All this is a matter of record.

For a number of years this Party tried to base itself on the Chinese working class and to set up a proletarian dictatorship. Finally defeated in Canton in 1928, the Communists fled to Central China. That is why they became "agrarian Communists," *i.e.*, tried to set up peasants' instead of workers' soviets. When they could no longer hold out there, they fled to the Far Northwest, to be nearer to Rus-

sian-dominated Mongolia and Turkestan and the Russian border. This forced march to the Russian border is what is described by White and Jacoby as a virtual "severing of ties" with Moscow!

The Communists' arrival in Yen'an coincided with a turning point both in their own history and in the party line. By now they had become an independent organization; their ties with Moscow were nominal.

While the Comintern was introducing its new line of "popular front" governments, support of democracy, and "collective security," and while Japan and Russia were engaged in undeclared border skirmish warfare, the Chinese Communists received instructions to propose to the Central Government a united front in the latter's struggle against Japan. Here is an authoritative summary, from the *China Year Book, 1938-9*, of some of the Communists' written proposals of 1937:

1. The Chinese Soviet Government shall henceforth be known as the Government of the Special Area of the Republic of China, which shall be under the control of the National Government and the National Military Council.
2. In their territory, a democratic system shall obtain. . . .
3. All activities to overthrow the National Government shall cease. . . .

The government accepted these proposals, designated the Chinese Red Army as the Eighth Route Army, admitted the Communist Party into an Advisory Grand Council of all political parties. But the armies never

obeyed orders, the Party never abandoned its one-party government, never permitted the Central government to publish or distribute its press in Communist territory (though the Communist press was permitted in Chungking). Instead, in confidential instructions to its functionaries, the Party explained:

To establish a democratic republic is the present strategy of the Chinese Communist Party, and its tactics are to cease civil wars and to cooperate with the Kuomintang . . . for the present circumstances require a temporary compromise. . . . To give up temporarily the revolutionary régime is merely a change of name and a preparation for a greater victory in the future. . . . Our compromise is designed to weaken the Kuomintang, and to overthrow the National government. . . . In reality, the Red Army should maintain its independent existence. . . ."⁸

However, the Communists did cooperate with the Central government in fighting the Japanese . . . but only until Stalin signed the pact with Hitler in 1939. Thereafter, the Chinese Communists, like all Communist Parties, praised the pact, denounced England and the United States as imperialist warmongers, and limited their military activities to trying to capture territory from the National government. Early in 1941, when the Russians signed a similar pact with Japan, the Chinese Communists approved this, too, even though the pact recognized the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo (*i.e.*, Manchuria).

⁸ *Present Strategy and Tactics of the Chinese Communist Party*. Yen'an 1937. Further extracts from this book can be found in the *Congressional Record* for July 26, 1946, "Extension of Remarks of Clare Boothe Luce."

That is the true measure of their "independence" from Russia, and the test of where their true loyalties lie.

Once more, when Hitler attacked Russia in June 1941, the Chinese Communists ceased their attacks on the Chinese government. But late in 1943, when Stalin felt that in the end the war would be won, the Russian press resumed its attacks on the Chinese government, and the Chinese Communists did the same.

The rest of the story — our shameful secret agreement at Yalta to hand over predominance in Manchuria, Northern Korea, Port Arthur and Dairen to the Russians; the moving of the Chinese Communists into Manchuria under the protection of the Russian troops, and the subsequent struggles and negotiations — is too recent to need repeating. Russia intervened hastily in the war in the East, after Japan asked it to use its good offices for peace, precisely in order to move into Manchuria. The Chinese government was thus caught by surprise, with its best armies outside the country, loaned to us for the Burma campaign. Transporting them to occupy territory over which the Russians have by treaty recognized their authority, that is the pitiful extent of our so-called aid to our ally whose troops we had previously taken to Burma. And already Mr. Truman has made the same shameful mistake in China, of refusing to sell arms to a government we legally recognize, which Mr. Roosevelt made during the Spanish Civil War.

Mao Tse-tung, Chou En-lai, his wife, Teng Yung-chou, Chen Shaoyu and other Communists, who were admitted by Chiang Kai-shek into the advisory People's Political Council, continue to take their orders from Moscow.

The first two are still shuttling back and forth, and Li Li-san, purified of political heresy by fifteen years of exile in Moscow, has been sent by the "non-existent" Comintern back to China, as Dimitroff has been sent to Bulgaria and Togliatti to Rome, with the latest orders. Indeed, the constant demand of Mao and Chou for the withdrawal of our temporary forces from China and their tomblike silence on the presence of a vast permanent Russian army of occupation speak for themselves. It is not hard for the least informed American to judge between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party, between Mao Tse-tung and Chiang Kai-shek on this simple and all important basis: the one stands for the unity and territorial integrity and independence of China; the other is a puppet of a foreign power, which today as in the times of the Tsars stands at Port Arthur and Dairen, is infiltrating into the richest province of China, Manchuria, and has even gone beyond the Tsar in lopping off Mongolia. "The purpose of my Three Principles," said Dr. Sun, "is to elevate China to an equal position among the nations, in international affairs, in government, and in economic life, so that she can permanently exist in the

world." Today, as when he pronounced them, these words are valid still.

So far, China's nationalism has been a benign nationalism, an awakening of national self-consciousness and the desire for national freedom. But if Russia's return to the seizure of treaty ports, spheres, concessions, extraterritoriality, and foreign policing armies, is imitated by the other great powers (*facilis descensus Averno*, how easy is the relapse into imperialism), then will this nationalism be exacerbated by another half century of struggle until it becomes chauvinism? Then, equipped with modern arms and modern industry, China's 400,000,000 — perhaps reinforced by India's 350,000,000 and other peoples of Asia — will give that lesser peninsula called Europe, even including Russia, cause to tremble.

Or will this mighty land, demoralized and torn by its fifth-column puppet army and puppet government, be absorbed into the Russian orbit which already stretches from the Baltic-Trieste line to the Pacific? Will the United States be so parsimonious and so timorous in its legitimate help to the ally that suffered most in the late war that it repeats the error it made in Spain, thus making another world war an increasing certainty? Will the government ever get the

rails laid down which the Communists keep blowing up, so that industrialization of China and an increase of "the people's livelihood" become a reality? Will the Civil War be terminated by the Communists' consenting (with Russia's consent) to become a political party, like any other, taking its chances with the vote of the people in a unified China able to settle issues by the methods of democracy, free from the arbitrament of guns?

Despite all the deliberate fog spread by books like *Thunder Out of China* these issues are so simple and so overwhelming that there can be no real doubt as to the desirable outcome. And any honest history of China's forty centuries, like Latourette's, encouraging us to take a long view of this people that has successfully surmounted foreign invasion and domestic discord for four thousand years, will give hope that the profound transformation the country is going through "will prove the birth pangs of a new and greater China." In that case, China will succeed in incorporating the best features of Western institutions and industry with all that is worthy in its ancient heritage, contributing therefrom to the West as well. For the revolution Dr. Sun dreamed of can be summed up in the Pauline motto: "Prove all things, and hold on to that which is good."



THE CHECK LIST

CRITICISM

ON SECOND THOUGHT, by James Gray. \$3.00. *Minnesota*. Mr. Gray, the new book editor of the Chicago *Daily News*, was formerly literary editor of the St. Paul *Pioneer Press* and *Dispatch* for about two decades. Here are reprinted those of his reviews that still look good to him — and running throughout are also many of his present-day views on the same authors and topics. The pieces are all effectively written and thought out, filled with shrewd insights, and sound, independent opinions. Mr. Gray is obviously a man of high standards, and he is not readily swayed by the ballyhoo issuing from the book publishers' publicity offices. He sees clearly that Sinclair Lewis' satire is of the obvious, heavy-handed sort, "not a precision instrument." He points to the "faked and phony" character of most of Bromfield's tales, which he labels in large part as "trivial, trite, and insincere." He disposes quickly of the literary pretensions of Clare Boothe Luce, and he dares to say publicly what many have long suspected, to wit, that Willa Cather "has never really mastered the craft of the novel." It is truly astonishing that Mr. Gray's critical talents have received such little notice in the East. He is easily one of the very best newspaper or magazine book reviewers in the country. It would be very difficult to mention a reviewer in the East who excels him.

THE PSYCHIATRIC NOVELS OF OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES; abridgment, introduction, and psychiatric annotations by Clarence P. Obendorf. \$3.00. *Columbia*. Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote three novels that dealt with psychiatric problems — *Elsie Venner* (1858-1859), *The Guardian Angel* (1867) and *A Mortal Antipathy* (1885). They are here abridged by Dr. Obendorf, who is clinical professor of psychiatry at Columbia. He also supplies an introduction and detailed notes throughout the text. He

argues that "In certain essentials Holmes' theory and philosophy of approach to psychological problems is prophetic of psychoanalysis and anticipated Freud's formulations and the psychoanalytical psychiatry which grew out of it." The book is hardly one for the general reader, for the novels make difficult reading, at least in their abridged form; but it will be of much interest to literary critics and historians. The first edition of this book was published in 1943. This second edition is revised and enlarged.

HISTORY

IT'S AN OLD NEW ENGLAND CUSTOM, by Edwin Valentine Mitchell. \$2.75. *Vanguard*. Mr. Mitchell has written another popular historical book — and it is excellent. Among the old New England customs he discusses are eating pie for breakfast, talking about the weather, beholding phantom ships, adopting peculiar place names, thirsting after strange gods, beating the drum, reaching a ripe old age, excelling in epitaphs, and harking back to the past. He deals with each one of them with immense learning, but the general reader would never suspect it, so well and unpretentiously does he write.

THE EVOLUTION OF MODERN LATIN AMERICA, by R. A. Humphreys. \$3.00. *Oxford*. Any writer who attempts to pack the history of a continent into 150 pages is inevitably going to oversimplify. Nevertheless, Mr. Humphreys' volume has a lot to recommend it. His object has been to sketch in only enough Latin-American history to enable the beginner in the field to grasp the outlines and to understand present-day conflicts. He makes a valuable distinction between the corrupt dictatorships below the Rio Grande and the totalitarian states which have arisen elsewhere; and he hammers away steadily at the social difficulties which doctrinaire democrats are apt to overlook.

LOWER PIEDMONT COUNTRY, by H. C. Nixon. \$3.00. *Duell, Sloan & Pearce*. Mr. Nixon, who is editorial director of the Vanderbilt University Press, was undoubtedly as good a man as could be found to do this latest volume in the American Folkways series; it is likely that his effort is not entirely satisfactory because of the limitations imposed by the nature of the series. Seventy thousand words simply are not sufficient to do a well-rounded job. The best that can be hoped for is to transmit a mood or feeling for the country which will encourage the reader to make effective use of the bibliography; and here Nixon is on the whole successful. The Lower Piedmont Country, which includes eastern Tennessee and parts of northern Georgia and Alabama, has a great deal of color and tradition, and its past is marked with drama, change, and progress. This book is a fair guide to its study.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

THE SHORE DIMLY SEEN, by Ellis Gibbs Arnall. \$3.00. *Lippincott*. Mr. Arnall's term of office as governor of Georgia has been one of the more encouraging events in recent Southern history. His book is the political testament of a man who has been effectively liberal in an illiberal area. Mr. Arnall believes less in the overall programmatic approach to politics than in steady, even if slow, progress in the betterment of social and political inequalities. He emphasizes works over faith, action over rhetoric. Especially to the point is his analysis of the South's economic bondage to the North, a condition frequently overlooked by many liberal critics of the South's social backwardness.

OIL ACROSS THE WORLD, *The American Saga of Pipelines*, by Charles Morrow Wilson. \$3.50. *Longmans, Green*. Mr. Wilson is concerned here mainly with the technical, rather than the political, side of the controversies now raging over American interests in oil overseas. The book contains probably everything one needs to know about the problems involved in laying pipelines, refining crude oil and locating reserves. Although it is written in popular style and makes an occasional attempt to incorporate some "human interest" material, the book is concerned too much

with purely technical matters to be of much interest to the general reader.

BETRAYAL IN THE PHILIPPINES, by Hernando Abaya. \$3.00. *Wyn*. The author of this angry book is a Filipino journalist who has apparently spent a long time digging up material with which to document heavily and with plausibility his assertion that the Philippines today have neither political freedom nor economic independence. The general thesis of the book is that American commercial interests interceded to persuade our government to suppress all democratic movements in the Philippines and impose as president a "fascist-minded collaborator" whom we could control. Unfortunately the book is not provided with an index.

LIFE LINE TO A PROMISED LAND, by Ira Hirschmann. \$2.75. *Vanguard*. As an official on the War Refugee Board, Mr. Hirschmann was stationed in Turkey during the war and given wide powers to do whatever he could to rescue refugees from the murderous persecutions of the Axis powers. He was instrumental in saving the lives of many men, women and children, and here he tells how he did it. His tale makes absorbing reading; at times, the facts he reveals about the moral callousness of governments (including that of highly civilized Great Britain) seem almost beyond belief, but his documentation leaves no room for doubt. Mr. Hirschmann is especially sharp with Great Britain. He insists that the Arabs and Jews in Palestine would get along well if the British did not foster bad feeling among them, and if they had not built up the Arab League, "a device for world propaganda and furthering British imperialist aims. It is no secret that the Arab leaders are financed by the British." In a postscript he says, "For the sake of world peace, we must insist that the question of the independence of Palestine be settled in the Security Council of the United Nations, where it belongs, and nowhere else."

WHERE ARE WE HEADING?, by Sumner Welles. \$3.00. *Harper*. It is unfortunate that our former Under Secretary of State chooses to write in frigid governmentalese, and employ the tone of an irritated schoolmaster. For what he has to

say about the current conduct of American foreign policy deserves a wide hearing. The criticism Mr. Welles offers in his book takes in American activities and diplomatic positions throughout the world. In each case he seeks to establish first the essential diplomatic facts; it is this aspect of his approach to foreign policy that distinguishes him so clearly from other writers and commentators in the field. Alike in the case of Russia and Argentina, China and Spain, Mr. Welles seeks to blend what we want with what we can get.

THE ARTS

BOARDMAN ROBINSON, by Albert Christ-Janer. \$15.00. *Chicago*. This volume forms a superb tribute to one of the most eminent artists of our time, a man who has achieved a truly enviable place both in the world of drawing and painting. He is now in his seventieth year and has been drawing and painting for about fifty years, yet several of his works, even those done several decades ago, are more vital than the latest canvases of younger artists. *Ahab, Czarist Officer, Whitman, Adam and Eve, The Breadline, Adopted Children, Staten Island Ferry, One Step, Two Step, Samuel Gompers* and *De Valera*—each of them is still a tremendous work, and perhaps more than one will join the treasures of our cultural history. There are about 125 reproductions in black and white and in color in this volume, and also a fairly complete catalogue, a bibliography, a chronology, and two appreciative essays by Arnold Blanch and Adolph Dehn. The book is beautifully designed and bound.

LOOK AT AMERICA, by the editors of *Look*. \$12.50. *Houghton, Mifflin*. This "panorama of the American scene" is a huge book, composed largely of photographs of every section of the United States and of almost every major aspect of the national life. A descriptive note is attached to each photograph, and in addition there is a running commentary throughout. The photographs are clear and impressive, though it cannot be said they are very subtle. Their effectiveness is that of the poster rather than the work of art. Much of the text is brash, startling in the tabloid sense, and often pointless or wrong. The very first sentences—"Energy. That is America in a

word,"—tell as much about this country as the statement, "Beef. That is England," would tell about that country. And the remark that "One of the direct and obvious benefits of the machine has been to provide means of travel by automobile, railroad and passenger plane," probably achieves a record of banality.

THE SCIENCES

HANDBOOK OF DIET THERAPY, by Dorothea Turner. \$2.00. *Chicago*. Dr. Turner is assistant professor in the department of medicine of the University of Chicago, and she has been Chairman of the Diet Therapy Section of the American Dietetic Association for three years and editor of its *Journal*. In this book she takes up such matters as the liquid diet, the low and high caloric diets, the low fat diet, the low purine diet, the high protein diet, and the salt restricted diet. In the appendix are several tables dealing with food composition. There is also a glossary of dietetic terms. The book is primarily addressed to doctors and dietitians, but a good deal of it is also intelligible to the layman.

GEOGRAPHY FOR GROWN-UPS, by H. A. Calahan. \$3.50. *Harper*. Here is a book on geography that is truly up-to-date and that will appeal to all intelligent grown-ups who have been mystified by such terms as the Great Circle, the Mercator and newer projections in map-making, and *Geopolitik*, and who would like to know precisely how geographic facts influence the making of international politics. Commander Calahan writes about his subject with remarkable clarity and enthusiasm. There are many helpful illustrations by Stephen J. Voorhies and the author, but the book lacks an index.

ANTHOLOGIES

THE STORY OF JESUS IN THE WORLD'S LITERATURE, edited by Edward Wagenknecht. \$5.00. *Creative Age*. This is a collection of poems, essays, short stories, play extracts and parables dealing with the Founder of Christianity. They are arranged under nine major headings: "His Coming," "The Hidden Years," "Legends," "His Work on Earth," "The Social

Gospel," "The Passion Drama," "Christ as Redeemer and Savior," "Afterwards," and "Christ Universal." Many of the selections are excellent, and these alone make the volume worthwhile. But the work would have been enormously better if greater thought had been given to the editing. What possible reason can there be for including the jingles of Geraldine Farrar, Katherine Lee Bates, and Howard S. Bliss alongside the work of Tennyson, T. S. Eliot and Robert Browning? And why include anything by William E. Barton, Manuel Komroff, and Anderson M. Scruggs?

THE QUEEN'S AWARDS, 1946, edited by Ellery Queen. \$2.75. *Little, Brown*. This is a collection of the prize-winning stories from the first annual story contest of *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*. It includes a wide variety of some of the best short crime fiction now being produced. First prize went to Manly Wade Wellman for "Star for a Warrior," a tale of crime on an Indian reservation, and of a young Indian detective. Among the second prize winners were William Faulkner, with his surging, powerful style; T. S. Stribling, Pulitzer prize winner who has turned his attention of late, and most engagingly, to matters criminal; and Helen McCloy, whose "Chinoiserie," a rich story of violence and intrigue in the Peking of 1860, with a colonel of the Oussurian Cossacks, as detective, is a literary piece of considerable merit. Some of the other contributors are such old hands as Philip MacDonald, Manning Coles, Michael Innes, and Craig Rice. There are, of course, weak spots in the assortment, but several of the stories are quite good, and at least two (those by Faulkner and McCloy) are first rate from any viewpoint, criminal or no.

SELECTED WRITINGS OF GERTRUDE STEIN, edited with an introduction by Carl Van Vechten. \$3.50. *Random House*. Mr. Van Vechten has selected "at least a sample of practically every period and every manner in Gertrude Stein's career from the earliest to the latest." The anthology apparently is a fair one, for it has the blessings of Miss Stein herself, who wrote a "message" for it shortly before her death. Though a considerable portion of what she wrote was a form of literary fraud or, at the least, brash non-

sense, she did influence many writers (particularly Sherwood Anderson and Ernest Hemingway). The influence was generally a deplorable one, since it made some writers think that unintelligibility was an especially commendable species of profundity. Mr. Van Vechten's introduction is poorly written and coy in manner. His last line is this: "Dear Gertrude, may I do a little carressing myself and say truthfully A Collection is a Collection is a Collection?"

MUSIC

HAYDN, *A Good Life*, by David Ewen. \$2.75. *Holt*. This biography of Papa Haydn is based upon a sound knowledge of his life and music. It is addressed to older children, and by some strange tradition this gives the biographer the right to fictionalize what the composer said in his most intimate moments. For example, when Haydn, a married man, renounced the love of the widow Mrs. Schroeter, this is what happened, according to Mr. Ewen: "Taking his hands in hers she clasped them tightly. 'I understand, Joseph. Believe me, I understand.' 'I knew you would — because you are so much like me.'" Is such shoddiness really necessary in juvenile biography? A fairly detailed chronology is appended.

THE MUSIC OF TCHAIKOVSKY, edited by Gerald Abraham. \$3.75. *Norton*. The music of Tchaikovsky has rarely been given the honor of severe criticism: it has generally been dismissed with a condescending sneer. Only lately has a more mature attitude begun to appear in a few of the more intelligent critical columns. The facts about the Russian have always been pretty clear: he wrote a considerable amount of maudlin tunes, some of them in appallingly poor taste. But he also wrote much music of very considerable merit in both the larger and smaller forms. His chamber music has been dreadfully neglected, though several of his contributions in this department are of the first order. In this book, compiled by a distinguished English critic, several authorities take up the various aspects of Tchaikovsky's work — his symphonies, his opera, his concerti, his ballets, his songs, his incidental music and his religious music. All the chapters are very ably done.

THE OPEN FORUM

MR. SCHWELLENBACH COMMENTS

SIR: Your letter . . . directing my attention to Vivien B. Keatley's article, "America's Displaced Persons," in the October issue of THE AMERICAN MERCURY is deeply appreciated. Mrs. Keatley's excellent article portrays vividly the seriousness of a problem which has been of concern to me for many years, the plight of the migrant farm worker. The AMERICAN MERCURY staff is to be commended highly for bringing the existence of such conditions to the attention of the general public.

It will be of interest to you and to the editors of your magazine to know that in May of this year, Major General Graves B. Erskine, USMC, Administrator of the Retraining and Reemployment Administration in this Department, established a Federal Interagency Committee on Migrant Labor to study the problems of migrant workers and also to suggest possible action toward improving working and living conditions. . . .

The functions of this Committee, as stipulated in the Administrative Order setting it up, are "to review existing legal authority and administrative machinery of the various Government agencies to determine how living and labor standards of migrant workers in industry, transportation and agriculture can be developed and improved" and "to submit appropriate recommendations as to . . . corrective action."

The membership of this Committee is composed of representatives of the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Labor, the Federal Security Agency and the Railroad Retirement Board. Qualified consultants from various other public and private agencies are assisting the Committee on its work.

At the present time, the Committee is in the process of preparing its complete report and recommendations on all phases of the migrant labor problem. Just as soon as it is available in final form, I will see that you receive a copy.

I am also referring your letter to General Erskine. I am certain that he will agree with me that your magazine has performed a valuable public service.

L. B. SCHWELLENBACH
Secretary of Labor

Washington, D. C.

KONE AND DEVOE

SIR: In your November issue are two articles that appeal strongly to the thinking reader; namely, "Progress in Science" by Eugene H. Kone and "Down to Earth" by Alan Devoe. The first article expands our conception of the universe, and the second emphasizes the unity or "wholeness of nature," as the author puts it.

Our mental concepts must expand as science progresses; our minds must be continually in the making. With each discovery there must come a readjustment of our ideas, our mental concepts, our beliefs, and our theories. With the continuous accumulation of scientific data — new truths are being revealed, new aspects of old truths thrust upon us, new mental horizons established, and new visions created.

We must anticipate further readjustments. While the fundamental verities do not change, our interpretations of relationships are being modified from time to time. To the extent that we are receptive to these discoveries and attempt to adjust our mental concepts to them, do we make progress. . . .

ROBERT C. BARNETT

Jefferson City, Mo.

PROPAGANDA IN RUSSIA

SIR: Regarding Neal Stanford's article "Anti-American Propaganda In Russia" in the November 1946 MERCURY I find I have a bit to say.

In view of statements reputed to be reliable to the effect that Stalin's fundamental purpose is first, last and all the time, a war on capitalism, no one need be surprised at the tenor of Soviet propaganda. Since the U. S. is the chief obstacle to "world revolution" it is only natural that we should be the prime target.

At this time it might be well to recall the words of Lincoln to the effect that a nation half slave and half free cannot long endure. In my estimation, that phrase should now read: A world half slave and half free cannot long endure. So long as there is totalitarian government in the world there can be no permanent peace.

LY L. MILLER

Salem, Ore.

THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION

SIR: I liked St. John Ervine's "For an English-Speaking Union" [THE AMERICAN MERCURY, August 1946]. Here is why I liked it. . . . I was in the U. S. Coast Guard during the war and I made nine consecutive trips to the "Isles." Six, right in a row, were made on what we "sea-going Cee-Gees," called the *Derry Ferry*. . . .

The people living on the British Isles are warm, friendly and very sincere. Why, they complained less about the buzz bombs than our own American housewives did about five cent eggs which, of course, the English people could never get. I saw them walk through the bitter ruins of Plymouth still smiling while searching for a place to purchase food while we people over here cried because we had to stand in . . . line for cigarettes.

To be brief: let us have more articles like this in THE AMERICAN MERCURY. I also think that "The Open Forum" is a good place for a free people to express their feelings.

FRED W. KELLER

Miami, Fla.

SIR: After reading "For an English-Speaking Union" in the August [1946] AMERICAN MERCURY I reflect, Britain is at it again, lining us up for another war, this time to save her from Russia. This article is really a subtle declaration of war against Russia, and every Russian student of foreign affairs will so consider it.

But there is nothing we can do about it, except to do the same thing we did before. I think it was Hitler who said the Britishers were the smartest people in the world, and he hoped his country would never get into a war with them.

As for Col. McCormick, I suspect that he also may be of the Noble Breed of Ulstermen, and perhaps also was my own g-g-g-grandfather; at any rate they all came from the north of Ireland. This is the important point: they came away from Britain and became Americans. And that is what I would like to see about 30 million other Britishers do. Why do they remain in that crowded little island?

D. DAVIDSON

Chicago, Ill.

SEX AND LITERATURE

SIR: I have just read the article "Sex and Literary Art," AMERICAN MERCURY, October 1946, by Ben Ray Redman, and wish to express my appreciation of it. It is very good.

EDWIN WALTER CHUBB

Athens, O. Dean Emeritus, Ohio University

ILLITERACY IN THE SOUTH

SIR: When I was in Ft. McClellan, Alabama, in 1942, about a third of my company were white Mississippians. Over a quarter of them were illiterate and they frankly admitted it. Whenever the local newsboy tried to sell them newspapers, they frankly said, "Ah cain't read, sonny." They used the same tone of voice a Northerner would use in saying "I can't swim" or "I can't understand the Einstein theory."

Mr. Dickson's statement concerning the Army intelligence test ["Senator Bilbo Meets the Press," AMERICAN MERCURY, November 1946] is likely to mislead a great many people. I assume the "AEF intelligence test" he refers to was one used in World War I. The present one is called the "Army General Classification Test" and one's score is one's "AGCT Score." . . . The average grade is supposed to be 100, although military authorities insist that it is not an I. Q. test as such things are for children. I fear many readers will think the scores Mr. Dickson mentions were made on the present AGCT test, although Mr. Dickson surely does not want anyone to get that impression. . . .

HUGH MORRISON

Mays Landing, N. J.

"BUSINESS" AND PROSTITUTION

SIR: Is it too late to speak of Mr. Deutsch's article ["The Prostitution Racket Is Back"] in the September issue? . . . I was teaching a summer term in Montana where I learned the following had taken place, shortly before. The mayor (and Corporation) had planned to open a red light house on the outskirts of town, for the sake of business. My friend called a meeting of the neighborhood farmers, at which he presented a petition to the honorable mayor (and Corporation), stating that in case such action was taken, the entire area would throw their trade and business to another town near by. Everyone signed. Needless to say no such place was ever opened. Business. Take the profit out, and see many things lose place, and face.

TERESA MOTHERAL

Oakland, Cal.

WHOPPER?

SIR: Frederick Esannason [in "The Open Forum," November 1946] . . . "waded out, and found the floating fluff to be a discarded wad of cotton . . . crowded with fleas." . . . Let your readers try (as I did) gently dropping a "wad of cotton" in the calm water of their wash basin.

They'll see it plunge to the bottom (as mine did) within seven seconds. Also consult page 64, *Natural History of Nonsense*, by Bergen Evans, Knopf, 1946.

BILL FERGUSON

New York City.

THE SUGAR SHORTAGE AGAIN

SIR: In the May [1946] issue of *THE AMERICAN MERCURY* you published an article entitled, "The Sugar Shortage and Politics" . . . attributed to a Mr. Hubert A. Kenny. . . .

Mr. Kenny's article is studded with misstatements of fact. . . . On the first page he states in part, "The American housewife, her family and the industrial user of sugar — is being seriously inconvenienced and penalized by a small but highly organized pressure group. . . . At the bottom of the sorry picture, however, is a small but powerful minority — the sugar beet and cane growers constituting only 3 per cent of American farmers, the beet processors employing 10,500 workers and the seaboard refiners employing only 14,000."

I have been in the sugar industry for twenty years, ten of which were with the cane refiners. I have sat in many government meetings since the Democratic Administration took over in 1933. I have been on all the beet sugar industry advisory committees to the several government agencies since the start of the last war and thus believe I am qualified to know the management of the various cane and beet sugar companies, the many government officials who have handled the sugar program and the leading brokerage companies who distribute the bulk of the nation's sugar. . . .

Referring to sugar beets, Secretary of Agriculture Anderson said: "They reached a very large situation in 1942 and then, of course, dropped back in 1943 and 1944 because of the competition that the War Food Administration consciously brought about by its need to have various other types of crops for the war effort, so that this reduction in recent years in beet sugar production is not due to inability on the part of beet sugar to grow but because of the desire on the part of the Government to restrict it."

Please compare the above with Mr. Kenny's statement on page 592, "Time and again this minority . . . has had its way in Congress. Its obstructionist political tactics have prevented government action which could have overcome the sugar shortage." . . .

On page 593 Mr. Kenny makes much to do about the so-called "Unholy alliance" wherein

insular and foreign refined sugars are subjected to a quota. He himself points out on page 591 that "The seaboard refiners employ only 14,000" so Cuba's share in potential refinery employees is nominal but the facts are that in time of war we had sufficient operating capacity to do a job.

On page 593 Mr. Kenny states, "But Cuba, the lowest cost producer of all, could only accept the quota she was given. It could not be increased, for our sugar interests had succeeded in writing Cuba's quota into the Act, while all other quotas were left to the discretion of the Secretary of Agriculture and hence subject to political pressure." If Mr. Kenny had actually read the Sugar Act of 1937 he would have noted in Section 202 that foreign countries and the Commonwealth of the Philippine Islands are allocated 44.41 per cent of the total quota and the domestic sugar producing areas are allocated 55.59 per cent. Out of these percentages each one of the producing areas are granted a definite percentage of the total. If the Secretary should, for example, raise his estimate of the amount of sugar needed to meet the requirements of consumers, Cuba would be allocated its share along with the domestic producing areas.

On page 594 Mr. Kenny makes a very interesting statement: "The sugar beet bloc's argument for this high production and subsidy program is that beets should be fostered as farm relief until we can grow nearly 100 per cent of our sugar requirements." He thus alleges that the beet industry would like to practically eliminate Hawaiian production which ordinarily amounts to some 900,000 tons per year and Puerto Rico with 850,000 tons. This, of course, would economically wreck both of those areas, which is too stupid even to consider. The industry has never made any such proposal.

On page 595 we are told that the domestic industry would never permit the Secretary of Agriculture or the Commodity Credit Corporation to purchase more than one Cuban crop at a time, which is completely erroneous. The decision was made independently by the Commodity Credit Corporation for a number of reasons too lengthy to discuss here but it is amusing to note that at the present writing the government has just completed negotiations for the purchase of both the Cuban 1946 and 1947 crops. . . .

In order to be as brief as possible I have commented on a few of Mr. Kenny's misstatements. . . .

W. W. PATTERSON

Saginaw, Mich.

(Continued on page 127)



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(Continued from page 125)

SIR: Mr. Patterson repeats the point that the shortage was caused by a small but powerful minority — the beet bloc. He does not deny their political influence. He does not deny that the beet industry failed to produce adequately during the war. He does not deny that "Time and again this minority . . . has had its way in Congress," or that its pressure prevented Cuba from averting the present shortage. . . .

President Roosevelt called the marriage of convenience between continental U.S. sugar growers and seaboard refiners an "unholy alliance." It was by tactical maneuver, rather than majority interest, that the "unholy alliance" succeeded in slipping in special protection against imports of refined sugar under the name of "direct consumption sugar" — a term that had never before been current in the sugar industry.

Mr. Patterson takes exception to the statement that the Jones-Costigan Act of 1934 wrote Cuba's quota into the Act, while all other quotas were left to the discretion of the Secretary of Agriculture and hence subject to political pressure. Then he quotes the Sugar Act of 1937, which of course only proves that somebody in Congress must have discovered what the beet bloc had put over in the 1934 Act.

" . . . until we can grow nearly 100 per cent of our requirements." "We," in my conception of our responsibility, includes Hawaii and Puerto Rico. Does Mr. Patterson hope to cast them loose, grant them their independence in order to put their sugar outside the tariff wall? The Congressional sugar bloc had been one of the leading exponents of Philippine independence for that reason, but perhaps this is a new maneuver.

" . . . independently by the Commodity Credit Corporation for a number of reasons too lengthy to discuss here. . . ." The "independent" decision of the CCC was of the same order as the independence of the Senate Finance Committee which held a rump session on June 20, 1946, according to my information, on the sugar bill HR 6689 as passed by the House earlier in the week. It acted on that bill without advance public notice. It did not even invite the State Department to state its position. And its action proposed changing the legislation from a temporary to a permanent basis, freezing the present sugar program on the nation for the next three years. This was done, I understand, with representatives of domestic sugar interests present, but without any warning or advance notice to others. The national sugar policy cannot be settled intelligently in a few days. . . .

HUBERT A. KENNY

New Preston, Conn.



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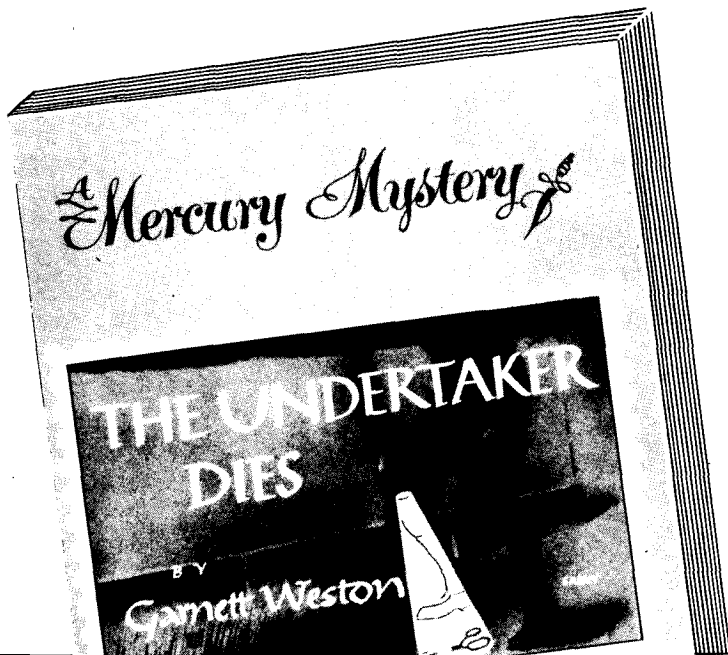
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